Mr. World and Miss Church-Member

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MR. WORLD AND MISS CHURCH-MEMBER

A TWENTIETH CENTURY ALLEGORY

BY

REV. W. S. HARRIS

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

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ILLUSTRATIONS BY

PAUL J. KRAFFT

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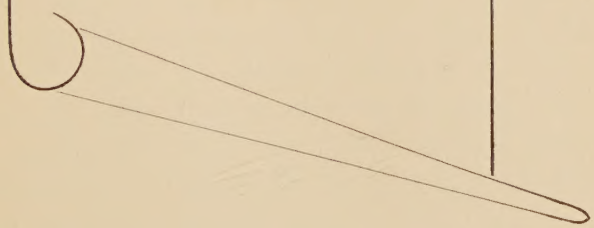
TO

Edwin L. Bergstresser

WHOSE TESTED FRIENDSHIP I HAVE
ENJOYED FOR NEARLY TEN YEARS AND
WHOSE KINDLY INFLUENCE HELPED
ME TO PRESERVE IN WRITING
THIS ALLEGORY
THIS BOOK IS AFFECTIONATELY

DEDICATED.



Preface.

AFTER long and careful study we send forth this book to do its work. We offer no apology for adding one more volume to the endless library of modern times, constantly increasing at the rate of over one hundred volumes per week, the great bulk of which is consigned to the debris of the passing years. We pray that this book may find a field of usefulness rather than an early grave.

We need not tell of the pleasures and difficulties we experienced in preparing these twenty-five chapters for the press. Let it be known, however, that we were seconded and assisted by several able critics who, each one independently of the others, kindly reviewed the manuscript. At the suggestions of these critics minor changes were made in the several manuscript editions. These critics deserve much credit especially for the literary finish there may be to this book.

The illustrations were drawn by Paul J. Krafft, of New York. They evince patient study and careful work, and display a crea-

tive genius well suited to the field of allegory.

The leading moral truths are developed in the memorable journey of Miss Church-Member upon the Broad Highway in company with the polite and yet fiendish Mr. World. In this lifelike journey the two companions come in contact with many of Satan's up-to-date schemes, and witness his far-extended operations in many a wicked realm. In the descriptions of all these things we have endeavored to be suggestive rather than exhaustive, for we have withheld the almost infinite details and brought to light only a mere synopsis of the panorama as seen from the lofty summit.

Will not the reader, as he takes one step after another in the progress of the story, realize more keenly than ever the unspeakable deceptions of Satan, so bewitchingly robed in the garments of subtle treachery?

The course of Miss Church-Member is a sad comment on the moving masses who are so thoroughly led captive by the Devil as to imagine that they are traveling on a more convenient way to Heaven while they are actually on the Broad Highway to destruction. The logical ending of such a life is pictured in the remorseful and tragical experiences of Mr. World and Miss Church-Member in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. It is our prayer that

each reader may be saved from such a terminus of life by journeying on the King's Highway and taking Christ as his all in all. Then when he comes to the place made shadowy by the power of sin and death, he will be surrounded with a light from the sure city of God and by a convoy of angels whose music will quell his rising fears, and by whose power he will be transported to his never-ending home.

THE AUTHOR.

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Introduction.

By Bishop Rudolph Dubs, D. D., LL. D.

In response to the earnest request of the author of this book I have written these introductory words, after a careful, deliberate reading of the allegory. What I have written expresses my own opinion of the book, uninfluenced by motives of friendship for the author or any other consideration.

The book is a powerful allegory, somewhat after the style of Pilgrim's Progress, but in no sense is it an imitation of any existing work of the kind. It is a masterful presentation, wrought out with excellent judgment and consummate skill.

The creatures of the author's vivid imagination are perfectly formed and fittingly clothed, living, moving, feeling, talking, in complete harmony as the development of the great drama goes on to its consummation. The author has evidently made a careful and profound study of the manifold dangers which beset the Christian church and threaten her spirituality, and consequently her influence and

power in saving the lost and maintaining the gospel standard of life and godliness in the world.

The encroachments of worldings upon the church are truthfully and graphically set forth. The manifold forms of temptation and danger are clearly exposed, and faithful, tender, earnest warnings and admonitions are set over against them. In depicting the various efforts of Satan and his agents to lead Christians away from God and duty, the author shows an extensive knowledge of the devices of the evil one, as well as a clear insight into the drift and tendency of modern forms of wickedness.

The final results of compromise with the world are set forth in vivid, graphic pictures drawn on the dark shadows as with a pencil of fire. The downward course of the deluded soul is followed, step by step; the snares and delusions of sin are exposed; the mask of vice is relentlessly torn away, and church-members can here see what fellowship with the world really means and whither it leads.

The religious tone of the book throughout is excellent. The delusive character of sin is plainly pointed out. The devices of Satan are laid bare with unsparing hand. The abominations of vice are not concealed. All this is done in language well chosen and unexceptionable.

The Christian life is pictured without cant or exaggeration. The beauty and blessedness of a devoted life are eloquently portrayed. True religion with its present comforts and its great rewards is presented in a most attractive form, and the contrast between the worlding and the faithful Christian, here and hereafter, is impressively set forth.

With this favorable opinion of the book, to whose edifying pages I introduce the reader, I deem it proper for me also to recommend it most heartily as a book worthy of a place on every family table and in every Sunday-school library. Let young and old read its fascinating and instructive pages. Let it be circulated by hundreds and thousands of copies. May the blessing of God attend the book in its mission and ministry wherever it is read.

RUDOLPH DUBS.

Chicago, Ill., March, 1901.

Looking through the open door of the Twentieth Century.

CHAPTER I.

The Meeting of Mr. World and Miss Church-Member.

1. The dying of a century compared to the waning of a day.

2. The allegory opens with a panoramic view of human life, as seen through the open door of the 20th century, on the Broad Highway and King's Highway. Blackana is introduced.

3. Mr. World meets Miss Church-Member at a place called Fellowship. From here she journeys with him on the Broad Highway where she witnesses several sad endings of human life.

IN the closing hours of a long day I climbed a rugged path to a high eminence whence I overlooked a beautiful valley and watched, with increasing delight, the changing hues of earth and sky.

As the shadows of twilight were deepening each moment grew more strange and mysterious until the waning day seemed to be transformed into the dying of the century; then I saw, as "through a glass darkly," the whole panorama of human life, with its painful pictures of sadness and sin, and its blessed scenes of peace and righteousness. I also heard the unmistakable wails of

a suffering humanity and the turmoils of myriad contentions, all strangely mingling with the songs of glory and the shouts of spiritual triumph.

In deep silence I continued looking upon these endless confusions of the church and the world as they still played their perplexing parts in the fitful drama before me. All of this so preyed upon my mind that I involuntarily cried out, in the anguish of my soul: "When will confusion come to an end, and sweet peace cover the earth as the waters cover the sea?"

"Will you wait for the winds to answer, or shall I?" replied a voice so passing strange that I was startled.

I turned to see in whose presence I was and, to my horror, I beheld a dark creature unlike any mortal being. He was without definite form and not cumbered with any garments. His indescribable face was set with two bright eyes, softened in expression until a slight halo revealed to me a countenance half beautiful and half terrible.

"Who are you, and what is your mission?" I finally ventured to ask after speech had found my lips, for I was altogether ignorant of his nature or purpose.

"I am Blackana, from the lower world of spirits, and am commanded here to stay until released."

"Until released? What power binds you here, and how long will you abide?" I asked in dread suspense.

"I must remain, as your companion and interpreter, until the vision is past."

I trembled under these announcements, but I was assured that underneath me were "the everlasting arms" and, moreover, I heard a still, small voice whispering within me: "Stand still, O mortal man! Neither Blackana nor any of his horde shall do thee harm. He hovers before thee at my bidding, and will leave thee only at my command. Ask him what thou wilt, and he must answer thee, even to the limit of his knowledge."

At this juncture, and without a moment's warning, my vision was enlarged and an unusual light flashed upon me. Quickly I cast my wondering eyes all about me and saw that I was standing at the very threshold of a great door. It was of such imposing dimensions and so magnificently constructed that only the architects of Heaven could have designed it.

Instinctively I turned to Blackana, whom I could now face without fear: "Where are we, and what is the meaning of this great door?" And as I spoke unseen hands swung it open upon its hinges.

"We are standing at the open door of the twentieth century. You may look out into the

coming years as far as you wish," replied Blackana in a cold, indifferent manner.

Thrilled by such an unusual sight, and the thought which his interpretation and words suggested, I marveled at his sullenness, for Blackana did not so much as lift his head to see the spectacle.

"O, Blackana!" I cried, "why are you so dead to such surroundings?"

"These are mere playthings," was his gruff reply. "To me the doors of the centuries, which open and shut on the cycles of time, are as trifles, neither lessening my misery nor adding to my pleasure."

During a brief, thoughtful silence I continued looking at him, as a shudder swept my whole being. I then turned from this creature so shrouded in mystery and, stepping forward to look through the open door, I was suddenly overawed at the still greater scenes which spread in wondrous panorama before my entranced vision.

Under the new light I beheld a marvelous sight, for I could distinctly see the myriad millions of humanity moving on the paths of life toward a common goal.

In the bright halo of the scene I saw the beautiful King's Highway, on which were marching the hosts of the church militant, led triumphantly

by the Spirit of God to the very gates of the Celestial City, which, though distant, I could yet see under the dazzling light radiating from the central throne of glory as from untold suns.

In the darker shadows of this same panorama I saw the Broad Highway with its thronging multitudes. Some, with deliberate step, scrutinizing the objects along the way; others, in mad haste, rushing on toward an awful destruction whose wreck and ruin loomed up dimly in the glare of an eternal burning.

Among the happy pilgrims of the King's Highway was one named Miss Church-Member, who had left the Broad Way of death, and entered, through Christ, into that marvelous light wherein she was now walking. Her tread was in sweet harmony with the footsteps of her Master, and her beautiful face was all aglow with the passion of pure love.

A pilgrim's robe added beauty to her form; a Bible, carried under her arm, gave some evidence of her spiritual character; and a religious emblem, worn over her heart, told that she was a member of some Christian organization.

Miss Church-Member, in traveling her chosen path, tarried at a place called Fellowship, which occupied a pleasing site close by the King's Highway. Here one could readily speak and associate

with the travelers who moved in gay companies along the Broad Highway.

At this visiting place she met a certain Mr. World—a good, jolly fellow, of corpulent build, who was attired in the fashion of the day, and bore himself with more than usual jauntiness in the presence of Miss Church-Member.

After a pleasing conversation, in which Mr. World plied his Satanic shrewdness and sophistry, he was emboldened to give this brief invitation: "Will you journey a short distance with me on this Broader Way that I may prepare myself, with more facility, to accompany you where you wish, even on a path as narrow as the one you seem to love?"

"Ah, Mr. World," she said, with a tolerant smile, "do you not know that you are walking on the way of danger and death? Why would you have me share your folly? It were a thousand times better for you to join me at once on a path that leads to everlasting happiness. Here you can drink the water of life in abundance, and feed upon angels' food. O, come, Mr. World," she added as she spoke more earnestly, "linger no longer, carry out the resolution which you have already broken repeatedly, and you will never regret so wise an action." Thus did Miss Church-Member urge upon him a course which, in her inimitable missionary spirit, she made really attractive to

him. Although he appreciated her genuine earnestness, yet he could not be induced to heed her words.

"You have covered the whole field of my intention," he courteously replied. "I sincerely wish to mend my ways, but there are certain things I must first overcome. How much better I could do this if one like you, in whom I have supreme confidence, would but journey at my side. Will you not do the work of a good missionary and, like Christ, adapt yourself to my level, that I may, by your uplifting influence, be drawn into a nobler life, and even have your companionship as I go up to the Highway of your King?"

Miss Church-Member, being of a sympathetic nature and of strong missionary proclivities, refused to heed her many counselors who feared for her safety, and actually stepped still farther from her wonted path and journeyed at the side of Mr. World with the desire to compass his conversion. But her conscience, at first, troubled her and her feet moved with a suspicious tread.

In this nervous, half confiding and half shrinking mood, she leaned lightly upon his arm, ever turning a deaf ear to the entreaties of her well-meaning friends who still hoped to dissuade her from this ill-advised course.

Mr. World was keenly delighted at her concession and loyalty to him. He seemed to be will-

ing to go to any sacrifice that might add to her comfort or increase her happiness. His many companions could readily see that Miss Church-Member felt "out of place." But she justified her own course by what she was aiming to do.

He saw that her dress of righteousness was in wide contrast with the filthy rags that covered his own soul, and so he preferred to look upon the garments that adorned his outer person, and the gaudy scenes on either side of the way.

I beheld this wide path along a great length, and I shuddered as I saw the masses thereon who were engaged in the frivolities of life as found in the swiftly passing pleasures of sense and sight. The thoughtless throngs were seemingly unconscious that underneath the whole length and breadth of the path there were strata of fire, and they were apparently blind to the sulphurous flames which, here and there, issued from openings into which many an unsuspecting traveler fell.

Sad to relate, of all the moving multitudes there were but few, indeed, who took warning and fled toward the King's Highway. Many, like Miss Church-Member, were walking on the forbidden path for no other reason than some weak apology.

"What mean these lurid openings?" nervously asked Miss Church-Member, for their flames excited her terror.

Miss Church-Member hurries to the rescue of an unfortunate victim.

Mr. World replied, with a look of surprise: "Have you never heard that these are to give light to pilgrims, such as we? Without them the way would prove very dark and dreary."

"What a contrast," she exclaimed, "between these lights and those that illumine the King's Highway! *They* shine from above, with increasing splendor, while *these* cast forth, from below, their uncertain lights. It seems to me that the farther we go the darker becomes the way, and its lights the more inconstant,—so fitful is their gruesome glare."

"Ah! I see what ails you," responded Mr. World. "Your eyes are at fault. We will presently meet the expert who will correct your vision ere your eyes are totally ruined."

The attention of Miss Church-Member was suddenly attracted by seeing a man who was just sinking out of sight into the fire of destruction. As soon as he disappeared the flames burst forth in fury through the newly-made opening. Instantly a servant of Satan covered the breach so that observers could no longer hear the wails of the poor man, nor smell the fumes from the burning strata.

Then did I look and, behold, I saw such places in countless variety, each attended by a servant of the Black Prince. Each opening made by an unfortunate victim was promptly sealed so

that others, in passing along, would the more readily be ensnared in one of these fatal fissures.

Miss Church-Member was more than alarmed at these sad endings of human life which now came to her attention more vividly than when she traveled on the King's Highway.

She also saw, not far ahead of her, a woman sinking in utter despair, and ran to rescue her. But the unfortunate victim fell to her wretched ruin before the hands of Miss Church-Member could give assistance.

"Help! help! I sink I know not whither," was her wailing cry, as she was passing out of sight, her arms outstretched beseechingly toward her would-be rescuer who arrived in time to see the first greedy flames that issued from the fresh opening.

"Oh, horror!" shrieked Miss Church-Member as she turned toward Mr. World. "That ought to be enough to keep any one from such a snare of wickedness and vice."

Without a moment's delay a demon rushed to the fiery opening and covered it from sight, completing his work so quickly and with such skill that neither the opening nor the glare of the flames were any longer perceptible. But Miss Church-Member refused to leave the spot, and with tears she urged Mr. World to place there a

sign of warning so that other short-sighted mortals who came that way might read and heed.

"It would be only a waste of time and energy. I have seen hundreds of such places where travelers have gone down, even under the sign of the Cross."

"Indeed, Mr. World, I feel as though I should stand here continually and speak words of personal warning to any one who might seem determined to walk in such a terrible path as this." Her finger pointed to the spot where she had just seen the poor victim fall to rise no more.

"Look yonder," he hurriedly spoke, as he touched her arm. "Do you see that woman with her steps in the same direction? Now try your skill," he added with more sneer than sympathy in his voice.

She did not tarry to resent his attitude, but quickly went to the woman and asked her to pause a moment.

"Are you willing to be saved from destruction?" earnestly asked Miss Church-Member.

"I am safe enough," was the indifferent reply.

"You are now walking rapidly toward an awful death," were her further words of warning.

"What right have you to judge me," she curtly replied, "since you also are on this Broad Highway? Have I not heard already the words

of warning from those who also wear the pilgrim's robe, but who journeyed on the King's Highway? Their words brought conviction to my heart and tears to my eyes, but your words only stir up my indignation."

"Why speak so unkindly to a friend? My only intention is to do you good. I just saw one who came to a horrible end by continuing a little farther in the same course that you are now pursuing."

Then did the wicked woman fly into a rage. "You need no more concern yourself about me. I have two eyes—as many as you have. Look to your own future, not mine; at your own steps, and not at another's!"

"Come," impatiently spoke Mr. World, as he drew her by the arm, "it is just as I expected; let us get away from this sickly atmosphere." But Miss Church-Member lingered only to see the heedless woman step to the last extreme and sink hopelessly, while her piteous cries for help came too late for any to rescue her.

"Let us follow this shining path," hopefully urged Miss Church-Member. But it is too rough and steep for Mr. World.

CHAPTER II.

The By-Path.

1. In their journey Mr. World and Miss Church-Member come to the By-Path leading to the King's Highway ; on this Miss Church-Member urges Mr. World to travel. He defers so decisive a step and defends his attitude by the use of sophistry.

2. Miss Church-Member, still hoping to win Mr. World to a better path, still forsakes the King's Highway and continues in his company.

3. A tilt with Blackana who defends Miss Church-Member for traveling on the Broad Highway.

THE highway of the world was so broad that one could walk thereon as loosely as he wished without fear of stepping from it.

Along the way there were so many things to attract the attention that the farther Miss Church-Member journeyed with Mr. World, the less frequently she looked toward the King's Highway. However, her face brightened and her hopes waxed strong as they suddenly came to a place where two ways met.

With quick insight Miss Church-Member saw that the By-Path was a blessed one and that it led directly to the King's Highway.

"Let us follow this shining path," she hopefully suggested. "I know it leads to the way of light and glory."

"Not such a path, my friend," hastily replied Mr. World. "Do you not see the terrible hill to which it leads, and those who are even now struggling to climb its arduous heights?"

"I clearly see it all," she calmly admitted, "but they who struggle most are endeavoring to carry many idols with them. If one will forsake his idols, he can, with ease and pleasure, mount to the shining summit which is but the edge of the King's glorious Highway. Come, Mr. World, hesitate no more. Let procrastination end, and go with me even to the hill, and I will help you to the summit—while Another will help you more."

"Very true, very true," he said, though somewhat irritated, "but we have not yet come to the place where I may wisely follow your advice. This path turning away to the right leads to a place that may seem bright from this point, but nevertheless I know it to be a narrow, rugged way, whereon a few of your friends are trudging, eking out a miserable existence. Urge me not to go thither. If you leave me, I can neither accompany you nor give you my assistance. Surely you have learned, ere this, that your needs are of such a nature that you must inevitably suffer embarrassment without my little help."

Miss Church-Member, with eyes but partly open to her own folly, was grievously perplexed

and not a little disappointed. She fell on her knees and wept. Looking up pleadingly into his eyes, she faltered :

"Twice have I yielded to you since we entered into companionship. You well remember the solemn promise you made, but at each time you deferred its fulfillment, and now I must again hear your vain excuses. I have suffered much for your sake, and have now the enmity of many a former friend, and even my pilgrim robe is becoming stained with the filth of this way."

"Come, come, my friend, be a woman and not a sickly suppliant. The portion of the King's Highway which we would reach from this point is too rough for my feet to travel. We will shortly come to a more convenient place ; then I can think more seriously of leaving this way."

"Ah !" sighed Miss Church-Member, "you say that in your folly. I can testify, from knowledge, that the way is most delightful and leads to mansions incorruptible in the Celestial City."

"Let us cease debating," interrupted Mr. World, with ill-concealed impatience. "If you have sacrificed so much through my fellowship and imagine that you can find better company, you may leave, but you cannot expect me to accompany you on so thorny and rough a path as this which you have so foolishly proposed."

Strengthened by the remnants of Christian

virtue yet within her, she sprang to her feet and was about to execute her noble purpose of leaving him. But a number of Mr. World's friends quickly rallied and complimented Miss Church-Member on the good she had already done. "Mr. World is a better man since he has known you," said one. "If you will continue walking with him on his own level, no one can estimate the amount of good you will yet do for him," hopefully spoke another.

These unexpected testimonies aroused anew her missionary spirit and changed her thoughts to these yielding sentences:

"No sacrifice is too great, if victory but comes at last. If there is hope that Mr. World will cease deceiving me and walk in the path of truth, I will consent to be his companion still a little farther."

"There is every hope of that," smilingly returned Mr. World as he suavely bowed to her and to the little group of companions who had given him such timely help.

As I saw Mr. World and Miss Church-Member moving on, in closer fellowship than ever, I waxed warm with indignation, and addressed Blackana who was still lying at my side as motionless as the strata of the rock-ribbed earth:

"Will you explain to me this folly of Miss

Church-Member, who has not only disgraced her cause before the fiendish Mr. World, but who also continues with him in such unseemly intimacy?"

"Miss Church-Member is not walking in folly. She is engaged in a noble work, endeavoring to elevate Mr. World to a higher Christian life," was the answer from the lips of Blackana in a low, heavy voice.

"Ah," said I, with a feeling of suspicion, "she is shining from the wrong lighthouse. The rays of truth will never reach him as long as she is in that position.

"Perhaps they might in a miraculous way," suggested Blackana.

"No good miracle is ever done in the steps of the Devil or in his dominions," I answered with boldness.

Then did Blackana enlarge himself, and as he replied he looked down upon me significantly. "O puny mortal, instruct me not in the miracles of my master. More great things are done under the canopies of Hell than mortals ever know."

At first I was filled with alarm, but under the voice of One invisible I rose as with superhuman strength, and I looked at him unflinchingly. "O horrible creature! I fear you not in any of your passions. You would even destroy me if

you could, but you are forever restrained by the Power that holds authority over all!"

There was a sudden rustling, unlike anything I had ever heard. The uncanny creature dashed toward me in his awful fury. But I moved not, neither was I touched. Then I stretched forth my hand and commanded him, in the name of One who is supreme, to cease his foolish ragings, else would he be instantly flung through the wastes of Hell.

Blackana, knowing his limit, as all foul fiends do, dared to venture no further in his rage, but calmed himself and, with unexpected civility, he addressed me. He told me, in close detail, how Mr. World, by his binding promises to his companion, had played the part of folly rather than Miss Church-Member who did nothing more than enter upon a more convenient and a Broader Way to heaven, and that, too, in good company.

"And what think you,—will Mr. World ever fulfill his binding promises?"

"Do not doubt it, sir. Mr. World is an honorable gentleman. His promises are always fulfilled.

"A lie! A lie! Can you not speak the truth?"

Again he was about to rise into terrible proportions when a great hand moved the door on its hinges. Blackana, interpreting that movement better than I, continued in dread restraint.

I looked again upon the Broad Highway, and saw how Mr. World had so completely won the confidence of Miss Church-Member that she now frequently expressed her sense of obligation to him, and declared that he was not so mean a fellow as some alleged, and as she had been inclined to believe.

"Pray, tell me who seeks to injure my good reputation?" he courteously asked.

"It has long been current talk on the King's Highway that you are deceitful and treacherous, and that you aim to lead people to ruin. You well know that I hoped, by mutual association, to win you to a better path. I find, even after some painful errors on my part, that you are not so much in need of reformation as I imagined. You are a very considerate and clever fellow, doubtless under the sway of a moral evolution, and whether I stay with you, or you go with me, it is now, to my mind, quite evident that you will soon reach a perfect condition."

The wily Mr. World chuckled. "You are newly endowed with the gift of a wisdom whose inward glory has lent its brightness to your eye, and has given savor to your very words. If you continue in your present state of liberality and broad-mindedness, you will not only share all that I possess, but will wear a crown set with gems of truth."

CHAPTER III.

The Devil's Optical College.

1. The college described.

2. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member have their eyes examined, and Miss Church-Member is supplied with lenses which warp her spiritual vision.

3. The allegory shows how Satan supplies every conceivable kind of lenses to suit the people of the world and the church.

4. Blackana, with deceptive words, attempts to defend Satan's course.

THIS institution of Satan has been in operation since the creation of man, having been remodeled as often as advancement in style or skill demanded.

Each one of the fourteen massive buildings was a gem of architectural beauty, and was devoted to a special line of study or practice. The entire group worked harmoniously toward the same end.

In the course of their journey Mr. World and Miss Church-Member drew nigh to this great college, but the shrewd and wicked Mr. World remained silent, waiting for the first words of his companion.

Miss Church-Member, however, as she looked upon the stupendous edifices, was so filled with wonder and admiration at the long stretches of masonry, and the perfect symmetry of parts, that she offered no comment until they were quite near the first building.

"For what purpose is this group of great structures used?" were her words that broke the brief silence.

"All for the sake of the eyes," he carelessly answered, as he called her attention to the King's Highway and the throngs of people that were admiring and entering the college from those parts.

"It is indeed wonderful," she commented, "that so small a thing as the eye should demand the service of such great edifices."

"The buildings are not too large nor too well equipped. Your surprise would not be so great were you to witness the large number from the two great highways that come here daily for treatment. You can see them now moving by thousands to and from the buildings. It might be wise for us to enter for consultation. My eyes, at least, may need some expert attention."

She, being anxious to see the interior of at least one of the buildings, offered no objection to his shrewd suggestion.

The building was so easy of access that there

was not one step to climb. An electric elevator served to carry them to the sixty-fourth floor which formed a part of the huge dome into which the upper portion of the great structure converged. This style of architecture not only added to the beauty of the appearance, but also proved to be perfectly adapted to the uses of the college.

The confidence of Miss Church-Member was fully won by the appearance of the interior and the courteous attention she received from the managers.

The consulting physician examined the eyes of Mr. World, then congratulated him upon the clear vision he enjoyed, and informed him that his eyes required no immediate treatment.

Turning to one side, Mr. World whispered to his companion: "While we are here you had better improve this opportunity and also get the benefit of an expert opinion."

"I have not come prepared financially," she blushingly and faintly replied. "I did not even dream of seeking the service of a specialist."

"That obstacle is easily overcome, for the examination is free, and if you should need further attention and would wish to receive it, I would deem it only a great pleasure to bear all the expenses."

After a brief, thoughtful silence she consented to the preliminary examination.

"Will you examine the eyes of my friend?" requested Mr. World as he stepped toward the chief oculist.

The expert accordingly tested her sight. First he held up, at a distance, the "Delusion of the New Jerusalem," but she was totally blind to it. Then he submitted the "Deceptions of the Holy Bible" of which she could again see nothing.

"Look through these windows to the Broad Highway, far out into the distance over rolling stretches of country. Can you see the gates of Heaven, at the end of the way?"

Miss Church-Member looked carefully, but declared that she could not see anything that appeared like Heaven or the gates thereof.

"Can you see that place called 'Perfect Peace' along the Broad Highway," continued the oculist as he pointed to a far-off region.

"I can see nothing that looks like it," she honestly confessed, quite surprised to discover the existence of these apparent defects of her vision.

"A very sad and extreme case," murmured the examiner as he requested her to open her Bible.

"Can you see, in that book, that all people shall be saved, and none perish?"

"I am surely blind to that and always have

been," she readily admitted with a little more boldness.

"Perhaps you can see the justice of God in punishing the sinner?" he continued with a touch of sarcasm in his voice.

"Plainly visible."

"So I expected."

He then proceeded to a more minute examination, after which he wrote a brief diagnosis and commended her to a specialist in the next building.

She hesitated somewhat; but Mr. World, handing her, confidentially, a handsome sum of yellow coin from his bag of gold, brought words of deep thankfulness from her lips, and gave decision to her steps in the direction he desired.

From the great dome they were taken in a closed car over the high suspension bridge to the adjoining building which was of still greater magnitude.

The room into which they entered, at such a dizzy height, surpassed, in its unique arrangement, anything of the kind that they had thus far seen. In long and high glass cases lay all the modern appliances used by the most skillful hands. The furnishings blended harmoniously with the general environments. All this won the utter confidence of the new and unsuspecting visitor.

"With pleasure," politely began Mr. World, "I present my friend, Miss Church-Member, who comes hither with defective eyes and a duly subscribed diagnosis from the chief of the oculists."

The specialist whom he thus addressed made an additional examination, plying his craft with all the ingenuity he had learned from his master. At the conclusion he delivered himself in this wise:

"I find, Miss Church-Member, that your eyes are very much out of order. A complex case, indeed. I have discovered ametropia in the particular form of irregular astigmatism. The pupil, covered by the unabsorbed remains of the pupillary membrane, is occluded by a deposition of inflammatory substance, occasioned by inflammation of the ciliary body.

"I have also noticed a severe type of hemianopsia, which, I presume, had its origin in congeniture. Minor defects are also apparent, but it is unnecessary for me to give further details."

Miss Church-Member could not refrain from weeping bitterly at this sad announcement. "Is it possible to effect a cure?" she sobbed.

"Ah! you need not thus lament," said the specialist in a tone of sympathy. "Millions have been altogether cured whose eyes were more diseased than are yours. Forget your tears and

be at perfect peace. Calmly confide in our skill."

She consented to their method, and was first subjected to a course of preliminary treatment. Many an hour she lay while her eyes were covered with cloths saturated with strange liquids. And when her eyes were uncovered she was compelled to sit in darkness, for the physician told her that her eyes had already suffered much on account of light. At times the pain was well nigh intolerable, but she endured it all heroically, hoping to gain thereby the boon of a complete cure.

After this preparatory work one who was skilled in the best methods of the age performed the operation, and Miss Church-Member was comforted by the assurance that her eyes would be fitted with special lenses, and soon she could again behold the natural light of day.

Mr. World was busily engaged during the treatment of Miss Church-Member, but he came repeatedly to her side and spoke words of cheer and urged her strict obedience to all directions.

Finally her new lenses were put to service, and Mr. World proffered his compliments profusely until the first impulses of vanity moved within her. *To be admired, on account of her appearance, seemed never so attractive as now!*

What a new world opened to her view! She looked down upon the Broad Highway with a

degree of pleasure hitherto unsuspected, and also upon the King's Highway, but only to see that the path was indeed a rough one and beset with trials and difficulties which, to her mind, now seemed unnecessary to a Christian life.

In the same manner I looked into all the apartments of each building, and was astonished at the presence of so large a number from the King's Highway, and a still greater throng from the way of the world.

"O Blackana!" I cried, "how long will this continue? Is there no end to deception? With such a changed view of things, how can Miss Church-Member crave for the King's Highway or urge Mr. World thither?"

"Miss Church-Member will be happier where she is," answered my uncanny companion as he grinned horribly. "By the aid of her glasses she can both see and enjoy the wonderful scenes along the way."

I knew that Blackana was covering the truth, but hesitated to insinuate as much. "Can you explain," I questioned in a half hopeful mood, "how those specialists can do their deceptive work so brazenly? Poor Miss Church-Member, deluded and defrauded, now stumbles rapidly onward with the fiendish Mr. World. Tell me, O agent of the Devil, do those creatures find delight in such horrible deeds?"

"It is not a matter of pleasure or delight with them, but rather one of loyalty to their king, whom you call 'Devil.' To serve him poorly means a more bitter hell, but to serve him well brings honor from his hand."

"But such honor!" I exclaimed, and then said: "I observe that Miss Church-Member wears colored lenses—tell me the meaning of this; and you, Blackana, hereafter deal no more in falsehood with me!" I demanded.

Blackana shifted his position, and with marked reluctance proceeded to answer:

"The Devil, my master, uses in his work all imaginable kinds of glasses, invented in the Wizard City. Every conceivable shade of color is made, each for its particular use. Through his agents Satan selects the lens for the patient's eye, and if it is worn as selected and directed, he has won a decisive victory."

"Foul and fiendish plots of Hell," I involuntarily muttered; but Blackana listened in silence.

CHAPTER IV.

Satan Interpreting Scripture.

1. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member now take an easier method of traveling, for they ride on a strange vehicle down the gravity road.

2. Miss Church-Member reads her Bible by the aid of her new glasses.

3. She is assisted in understanding it by a minion of Satan who comes robed as an angel of light.

4. Her glasses enable her to distinguish between the inspired and the uninspired parts of the Bible; for this ability she is highly complimented.

THE Broad Highway, after leaving the Optical College, was especially hard to travel. Here Mr. World secured a fashionable vehicle propelled by some secret force. Into this carriage he assisted Miss Church-Member, and each was delighted with the smooth descent down the gravity road.

"This is delightful traveling," she said, as she reclined upon the luxurious cushions of the conveyance. Aided by her new glasses she enjoyed the scenery along the way more than ever.

"I am glad you appreciate it," he smilingly returned. "According to my notion, riding is indeed preferable to walking. From these elevated carriages one can witness so much more of the world, and can also with more distinctness see the King's Highway with its trudging pilgrims seemingly unconscious of this better mode of travel."

Miss Church-Member took a mere casual glance at the Old Path and her former associates, and seemed to feel thankful that she had risen from bigotry to a more charitable view of things.

Her Bible, although closed altogether too long, had never been surrendered. But she had received strict orders not to read it until her eyes were fully adjusted to the new lenses.

Now, however, she opened it and was reading it under the new light, lifting her eyes at close intervals so as to miss nothing of beauty or interest along this way of the world.

Mr. World observed her careless manner,—how she turned from chapter to chapter in brief succession and fixed but little attention on any particular portion.

"I would urge you," he kindly advised, "that if you feel aught of headache or heartache, through excessive reading, to close the book at once."

She made no reply, but to his surprise was

Miss Church-Member was reading the Bible to her companion when there appeared to them an interpreter who was like unto an angel of light.

now deeply engaged in the perusal of the seventh chapter of Matthew.

"I have heard that some parts of that book are very interesting," he said in his good natured way. "Will you not read aloud to me?"

With a return of the old passion for his conversion she gladly complied and read the whole chapter while they continued gliding smoothly along.

An interesting discussion ensued, during the course of which there joined them one who was like unto an angel of light.

After hearing his smooth sentences of general Bible-knowledge, Miss Church-Member exclaimed: "Who art thou, and how didst thou gain so great a knowledge of this Book?"

"I am but a harmless creature of the air, going whither I will. I have studied that Book through all the changes of time and understand every part of it. I would, even now, make any sentence as clear as light to thee."

"And thinkest thou that this part is true?" hopefully asked Miss Church-Member as she raised the open Bible and pointed to the chapter she had just read.

"Every sentence is true, but in reading it there is grave danger of misapprehension. Didst thou have difficulty with any particular part of the chapter?"

"With verses thirteen and fourteen," she replied.

The angelic interpreter then read them in a fine resonant voice.

" 'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in hereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.' "

"If these words are really true," quickly commented Miss Church-Member, "we must be traveling in the wrong way. Does it not appear so?" she queried, as she looked with increasing interest at the angelic being.

"Naturally it does," he shrewdly answered, "especially if you look merely at the surface of the text; but the pearls of truth lie deeper."

"I well know that the King's Highway is called the 'Narrow Way' and this, whereon we journey, the 'Broad Way.' Surely this part of Scripture is against us," insisted Miss Church-Member, as her countenance grew more troubled.

"Thou needst not stumble at such easy Scripture; behold, the meaning is quite clear! They who travel on the so-called King's Highway are continually exaggerating the *merits* of the way, thereby making it appear greater and

broader than it really is. They go so far as to claim that the way is broad enough to accommodate all the people of the world, were they minded to travel thereon. Therefore those who thus make the way broad by their own conceits will meet with destruction. This is the meaning of verse thirteen."

"It is certain, according to verse fourteen, that we have a strait gate, and none, on this road, imagine or claim that the way is broader than it is; so we are credited with having it called 'narrow,' for it is as narrow as we claim it to be."

"Notwithstanding your explanation and the relief these glasses have given me, my conscience is still troubled, and methinks I hear a voice from this Bible chiding me. This is the chief barrier to my real happiness," she boldly confessed.

"Thou shouldst not dwell in fear," spoke the shining adviser. "Do not allow the errors of any false teaching to mar the peace and happiness of this way. Bid farewell to all thy inward doubting, and taste the imperishable sweetness of the world, turning a deaf ear to the voice that chides thee unkindly."

"But the voice comes from my Bible," she tremblingly declared.

"Truly said, Miss Church-Member; it comes far enough *from* the Bible. Why not listen to the voice that *is* the Bible. Thou art in harmony

with every part of Scripture. Let not false voices drive thee on to deeper grief."

She then looked at the shining form with more curiosity than ever before.

"Who can this be?" she asked Mr. World in a passing whisper. "You have seen how he urges me to perfect peace, and so unselfishly."

"'Tis but a happy friend that comes in the hour of need. Should we not give heed to his kindly voice? If the studying of that Bible gives you pain, adding to the weight that already wearies your heart, why not close the book and, continuing on this way of ease, look more carefully on outward things again?"

"Think you, Mr. World, that I would lay down my Bible? This is the book that mother loved. It has always been my Book of books. It contains the code of laws that controls the whole spiritual world, and it is the only lamp that leads to light and to the gates of Heaven. You need it as much as I. Why ask me to lay it down?"

"*Nay, nay,*" spoke the angel of light, "*urge her not to discard her Bible, but rather to get a true understanding of it.* Perhaps," he continued, turning again to Miss Church-Member, "thou hast met with other mysterious verses in this chapter. If so, I will gladly serve thee, for I love to give light to an honest heart."

"I see nothing more now that gives me

trouble. These glasses, which I got through the kindness of Mr. World, have helped me to understand your interpretation so that the rest of the chapter is quite clear to me."

"And how does the whole Bible appear since thy sight is so improved by those fortunate lenses?"

"It certainly appears vastly different," she confessed. "It is so much more liberal in its teachings than I ever before imagined."

"*Hast thou become so far advanced that thou canst, with thy more comprehensive view, distinguish between the inspired and the uninspired parts?*" asked the shining one with an air of dignity.

"Not clearly so, although I have recently doubted the genuineness of some parts which still hold their place in the book."

"Thou art coming to the true light," he flatteringly replied. "Blessed is the event that ever changed thine eyes to see so great a truth. Oh, that all the world might thus drink from the fountain of knowledge!"

"When will the time ever come that the Bible will be rid of its errors?" impatiently broke in Mr. World.

"In that happy day when the mists of superstition shall vanish before the true light of personal liberty and free thinking," came the answer from the bright-robed angel who was

none else than a minion of the Devil in disguise.

"How could such a glorious work best be accomplished?" asked Mr. World whose interest now was more intensely aroused.

"Only by Christians who ought to appoint a committee from their own number,—persons like our friend Miss Church-Member. This committee could decide, by a majority vote, what parts of the Bible to expunge. Then the church and the world would have a Bible reasonably free from errors. Our present Bible has so many objectionable parts which, of course, could not have been inspired, and any person who has the courage to correct it will be doing the world an incalculable service."

"Amen and amen!" enthusiastically spoke Mr. World. "The Bible is certainly a great book, but it would be vastly improved if once rid of its interpolations and errors of translation. Any preacher who would use in his pulpit such an abridged Bible would have my profoundest respect, and I hereby pledge half my fortune to the first minister who will do himself the honor of taking such a step."

"That will have its desired effect," smilingly commented Miss Church-Member, "for there are some gentlemen of the cloth who would quickly sacrifice any conviction for such a sum of money."

'And here," added the angel of light, "I hold in my hand a crown of fame set with the gems of honor. I hereby engage to place a crown like this on the head of each minister who will, in preaching and teaching, abridge the Bible and ridicule its weaknesses. Of course he must not cast reflection upon the real Word of God. He must only denounce and destroy the errors that have crept into it."

With these words the bright messenger disappeared, and Miss Church-Member endeavored again to know more about his identity, but Mr. World did not altogether satisfy her curiosity.

Then, as they sped onward in their well-devised vehicle down the gravity road to Hell, Miss Church-Member continued reading her Bible quietly.

"How changed the teachings of this book appear," she soliloquized. "I can now see how foolish I once was in taking so narrow a view of its truths."

I took a passing glance at the King's Highway, and saw a virtuous and holy woman on her knees in prayer, with a Bible opened before her.

She read from the Book, doubting not its words, and was pleading earnestly with God for a better understanding of them, until flash after

flash of heavenly light filled her soul, making her face shine with more than human glory.

To her the Devil, robed as an angel of light, made no appearance so long as I looked.

Then I asked Blackana, and he told me that Satan feared that which was sharper than a two-edged sword more than a large number of professing Christians not filled with the word of God.

"And what think you of Miss Church-Member?" I continued.

"She is a fine character," spoke Blackana as a hideous grin spread over his face.

Then I was moved with indignation, and I spoke with fire in my voice: "Give me no more deceptive words of Hell! Tell the naked truth. What is the estimate that Satan places on one who acts like Miss Church-Member?"

Blackana moved not a feature at my changed attitude, but spoke calmly within the bounds of truth: "Satan considers such a one as a valuable ally to his cause, for she is now working against Jesus Christ on her imaginary road to Heaven. Nothing is more helpful to Satan than when members of the church believe that parts of the Bible are untrue. It is indeed gratifying to us," continued Blackana with a fiendish smile, "to see the twentieth century of the so-called Christian era opening with the church wrangling over her

Bible more desperately than ever, and some of the learned leaders, and those of lesser light, laying the lash on him who believes that the regularly revised version of Scripture is of sufficient authority and approved of God."

Thus Blackana, in dread reluctant tones, and with his tongue still unfriendly to Christ's cause, was continuing, when a voice from above gave this startling and silencing testimony.

"*Such Scripture is an impregnable rock; and they, who by faith stand thereon, cannot be poisoned by the fiery darts which are hurled even by the latest invented guns from the Wizard City. All Hell secretly acknowledges the strength of this foundation, even though part of the church on earth refuses to do as much.*"

CHAPTER V.

The Devil's Pawn Shop.

1. Miss Church-Member with her new glasses looks upon her attire and, not being satisfied with her pilgrim's robe, exchanges it for up-to-date apparel.

2. The similar action of Mr. Deacon and Mr. Elder described.

MISS Church-Member, having closed her Bible, was engaged in a close scrutiny of her attire. By the aid of her glasses she realized very keenly that her garments were out of harmony with her environments.

"Will you answer a frank question?" she modestly asked Mr. World. "Do you think my pilgrim's robe becomes me as it should?"

"A very delicate question. I should never have ventured a criticism without your invitation to do so. Sincerely, your whole attire is somewhat antiquated. It is just as faulty as the Bible. So I would advise you to wear apparel more suited to your natural charms."

"But where can such be found?" she blushingly asked, offering no comment upon Mr. World's aspersion upon the Holy Scriptures.

"At numberless places along the way. In

A Scene in the Devil's Pawn Shop.

"Her beautiful pilgrim robe was drawn through the dust and relegated to the rear."

the distance I see an exchange store, duly authorized to do business along this Highway. If you so desire, we will proceed thither."

She assented gratefully, and soon the vehicle stopped. The two alighted and stepped into the place known along the King's Highway as the Devil's Pawn Shop.

This establishment was easily accessible from either Highway, and had been in operation for thousands of years, carrying on an extensive business.

In such a place our parents pawned a glorious inheritance for a taste of forbidden fruit, and Esau exchanged a legitimate birth-right for a mere mess of pottage.

In another similar place Judas sold his Lord and Master for thirty dirty pieces of silver; and Ananias and Sapphira pawned their natural and spiritual lives for a little worldly profit which was held but for a few hours, and that in guilt and pain.

Satan has a Pawn Shop, or an exchange store, for every phase of desire that can enter into an unsatisfied heart, or a soul unduly ambitious. This one, into which Mr. World escorted Miss Church-Member, is intended for those who become dissatisfied with the dress of righteousness, or for any who wish a change in any part of their apparel.

It proved intensely interesting to Miss Church-Member, with her new-found ambitions, to walk through the aisles of this great department store, each department being used for a separate kind of apparel.

The entire Pawn Shop was full of old curiosities which had never been redeemed. These, and more recent specimens, told the story of many a faithless pilgrim. In the footwear department I saw many a "preparation of the gospel of peace" which had been pawned for shoes of worldliness, and elsewhere I saw the garments of truth which had been girt about the loins of the saints, but which had been exchanged for robes of vanity.

There were also many antiquated pilgrims' robes which had been given for more fashionable attire.

Miss Church-Member became more and more ashamed of her own robe as she saw how many already had effected the exchange which she was now contemplating.

One of the shrewd attendants, observing the impatience of Miss Church-Member and the significant look of Mr. World, approached her and offered to render such assistance as she might desire.

"I am feeling wretchedly out of place and out of style in my present condition. Can I not

be dressed in a way more consistent with my station?"

"We can readily and easily supply all your fancies," answered the attendant with a graceful bow and a smile which gave re-assurance to Miss Church-Member.

The sad transformation was effected in a manner well pleasing to the Prince of Darkness. Her beautiful pilgrim's robe was drawn through the dust and relegated to the rear.

My own heart saddened as I beheld the changed appearance of Miss Church-Member, who had just taken one more step in her downward course, and who was still vainly imagining that she was on the road to Heaven.

I saw, with disgust, her fantastically feathered hat of conceit, her broad sleeves of self-righteousness, her ruby bracelets and necklace of vanity, her flowing garments of personal liberty, and her shoes of fashionable infidelity.

Then they made a strong effort to induce her to pawn her Bible, but to no purpose, for she had clung to it so long that it had become a precious souvenir with which she declared she would never part. Thus I saw how some worship the Bible who do not worship God.

Finally they emerged from the Pawn Shop, and glided along in their mysterious carriage more rapidly and smoothly than ever.

The two happy companions, free from their former embarrassment, now enjoyed the scenes of life along the way with increasing pleasure. The moving masses, in their diversified employments, yielded constant entertainment.

Miss Church-Member was soon agreeably surprised to see Mr. Deacon and Mr. Elder, who served in the same church to which she belonged. The carriage overtook them in a rather isolated place and stopped at their side, in obedience to the will of Miss Church-Member.

"Can it possibly be that I meet two of my church officers at this unexpected time and place? How came it about that you also have chosen this 'Broader and Better Way' to Heaven?"

The two men were slightly abashed at first and stood speechless as if in doubt what to say, or as if they were unable to recognize her.

"Ho! ho!" cried Mr. Deacon, "here is Miss Church-Member who sits in one of our front pews."

"Her appearance is wonderfully improved however," added Mr. Elder in an undertone.

"How came you to adopt this dress and be in such close fellowship with Mr. World?" asked Mr. Deacon.

"I am now in the midst of my missionary work, endeavoring to lead Mr. World into church-

membership," were her glib words of explanation, though, somehow, they were unsatisfying to her ear ; but she was rapidly learning to stifle such unpleasant qualms of conscience.

"She is doing a grand work," said Mr. Deacon to Mr. Elder with gestures of approbation.

"Are you any better than you were since such an elevating influence has been thrown about you?" asked Mr. Elder, as he turned to Mr. World.

"Happy for me that Miss Church-Member ever undertook my case, for I am now nearer joining the church than ever before."

The two church-officials offered their hands to Mr. World in warm congratulation, and then praised Miss Church-Member for her timely efforts which they felt sure would terminate in his conversion.

"What more is required of me in order that I may join your church?" inquired Mr. World in a voice of deepening earnestness.

"Nothing more than to express your willingness," responded the two. Your morality is beyond suspicion, and your fulfillment of the duties of citizenship has always been praiseworthy ; therefore your religion is quite exemplary. It lacks but your admission into the church."

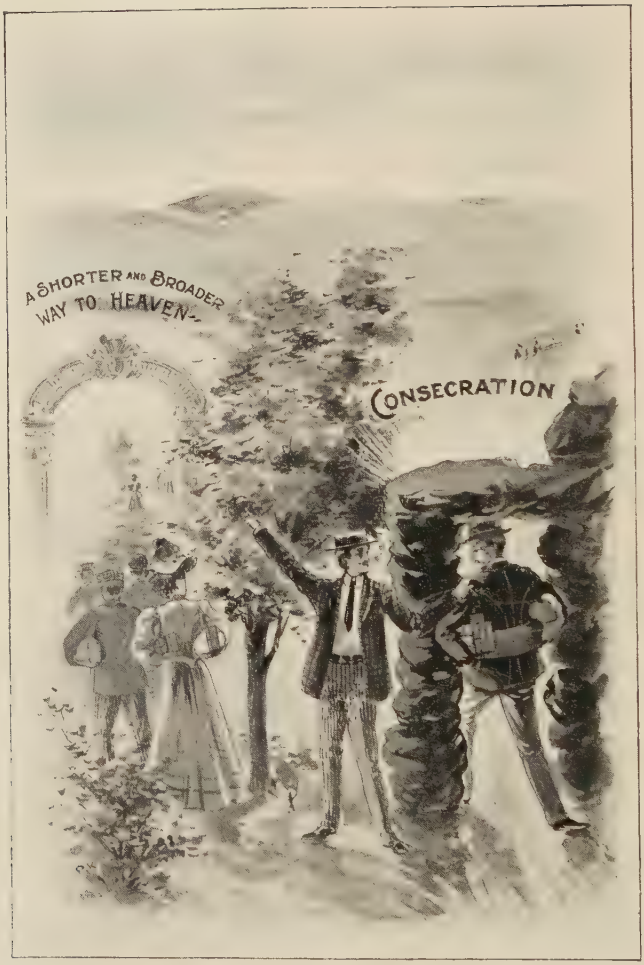
"I would have joined before now had it not

been for a radical element potent in the councils of the church, and especially for the narrow views entertained by your minister. If you had another pastor, one of more liberal cast of mind, it would not only influence me to join, but many of my wealthy and honorable friends would do so as well."

"It certainly is a sad state of affairs," sighed Miss Church-Member. "We are losing heavily by reason of such narrowness. I thought differently at one time, but these glasses have given me a wider and clearer range of vision."

"Your words indicate a sound judgment," commented Mr. World, and the two church officials listened eagerly. "Why should the church compel a man to journey on a path so narrow that he can scarcely make any progress?"

"A sensible view of it," said Mr. Elder, "for I have learned by experience that it is impossible to travel far in the way you mention. I tried it until recently, when I gave it up in disgust. I patronized an old established exchange store, disposed of a part of my outfit, and got in exchange something up-to-date, as you see from my appearance. I then endeavored to walk on the old path, but soon came to an especially narrow place called Consecration. I could not squeeze through. I struggled hard and long until one came to me and said: 'Let go what thou hast under thine



Mr. Elder, unable to push through the narrow pass of Consecration, was compelled to take the "Shorter and Broader Way to Heaven."

arms and belted to thine heart, and thou shalt go through with ease and rejoicing.' That was asking too much of me, for I paid a high price for these things and was minded to hold to them at all cost. I then endeavored more earnestly to push ahead, but found that I could not. As I looked around me, in despair, I saw a path leading to the left, under a beautiful arch, whereon I read this inscription :

A Shorter and Broader
Way to Heaven.

"This path I took and have been traveling comfortably thereon, especially since I found this still Broader Way into which it led. If only all church-members would know the comforts and advantages of this way, they could no longer refuse to travel it."

"They are finding it out more and more every age," said Mr. World with a complacent smile. "The church and the world ought to be one and, according to the teaching of the Bible, how could this be better accomplished than by having the church come down to the level of the world, and from that point lift the world upward. That was Christ's method and example. The church of to-day should not wish to be greater than her Lord."

The two church-officials looked at each other in surprise.

"Without doubt that is broad-minded theology," first spoke Mr. Deacon.

"It is indeed refreshing in contrast with what we must hear repeatedly from the troublesome element in the church," added the other.

"Will you not tell us how you also came to reach this favored place?" inquired Miss Church-Member, as she gave her attention momentarily to Mr. Deacon.

"It came about in a very odd manner. I had been wearing an old-style robe of righteousness, and gradually came to see that it was totally out of harmony with the higher thought of the age; so much so that I became odious to many liberal-minded people. A sharp struggle ensued between my conscience and my judgment. In the midst of this conflict I came to a place which offered to accept my old garments in exchange for seasonable attire. 'Anything for peace,' thought I; so I entered the establishment and selected this apparel, and these additional advantages. It cost me nothing but the mere willingness to exchange, and would I not have been foolish to refuse so much at so small a price?"

"Without a doubt," quickly answered Miss Church-Member. The others forcibly confirmed her answer.

"After I had completed my bargain I con-

tinued my diligence in the work of the church and in traveling on the good old Narrow Way. I came to a place called God Praise, and got through with little difficulty; but voices from unseen creatures spoke terror to my soul. In this unhappiness I trudged along until I came to a narrow pass known as Sacrifice. Through it I could not go. I struggled again and again. I also heard a voice saying unto me: 'If thou wilt wear the garments of salvation, and cast off these things of earth, then thou mayest pass through all thy sacrifice with ease and sweet delight.'

"The voice troubled me much, for I feared it spoke the truth. There did I spend a long season in mortal dread and doubt, and thought I would rather die than suffer thus. Suddenly, as if blind to it before, I saw a sign apparently moving in circles about me. It settled to my left and thus it read:

TO HEAVEN WITHOUT SACRIFICE.

"At once a smooth path opened to view, and I chided myself for having been blind to it so long. I entered upon it and hastily pursued my journey, and soon from thence passed upon this Broad Gauge Road. I traveled hereon for a long time when, to my delight, I came across Mr. Elder. I assure you we have had companionable seasons. We are on our road to

Heaven and expect eventually to reach that place. Many persons of the Narrow Gauge Road have told us that we are wrong, deceived, and would be hopelessly lost if we do not change our course, but methinks that those people are disregarding the Bible where it saith, 'Judge not that ye be not judged'; and 'Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly.'"

"Ah! Mr. Deacon," quickly complimented Mr. World, "you must be a champion in the use of Bible truth. How can these bigots expect to stand when such Scripture condemns them? It will be a joyful time for all of us when these self-righteous critics shall have pulled the beams out of their eyes and be able to see us in our real innocence."

While Mr. World was speaking these words he assisted Miss Church-Member into their strange vehicle and, when his last sentence was ended, they bade a hearty farewell to the two acquaintances and smoothly glided on, not tarrying to hear the words of commendation which each church-official was speaking simultaneously.

CHAPTER VI.

Satan's Law Departments.

(*Underground.*)

1. An allegorical representation of Satan's underhanded methods in law and politics. All seen during a thrilling journey with Blackana through the underground regions (level below level) where the laws of Hell are hatched.

2. A realistic climax,—ultimate triumph of right in the civil realm.

SNOW saw two mountains so high that their shadows perpetually darkened the Broad Highway which covered the wide valley between them.

In this Shadowy Vale many held permanent residence, until the whole region swarmed with teeming millions of every tongue and tribe on the face of the globe.

At the base of the mountains, on each side of the way, there were numerous large openings through which imps of darkness were constantly passing. Most of them were habited as angels of light.

"Tell me the mystery of those dismal openings," I asked as I turned to Blackana.

"Words are inadequate to tell of the places to which they lead. To know aright one must see," he answered with marked indifference.

For a moment I silently looked upon Blackana whose evasive answer had so greatly aroused my curiosity.

"Beyond those ominous portals I can discern nothing," I murmured. "How can I be privileged to see what is there hidden?"

"Come with me," coldly invited Blackana, "I will guide you to the nethermost realms now unseen by you. This I do not willingly, but I am thus commanded."

Not wishing to receive my orders from the mouth of a demon, I talked to my better Friend who bade me go and be assured that *a body-guard of ten thousand would ever be at my side, though I saw them not.*

On wings, swifter than the wind, Blackana and I covered the intervening space. We stood in the dark valley at one of the openings, now appearing ten-fold larger than before, and the mountains reared their imposing crests as if to an endless height.

"Follow me," grimly spoke Blackana as he advanced through the monstrous arcade into the deepening darkness.

I remembered the ten thousand, and feared not as I followed.

Downward and inward we went, with no light but a horrid glare casting its uncertain rays athwart our path.

"Is this the passage-way to Destruction?" I cried, as I saw how spectral all things were, for more than a thousand grimy faces had already added their fitful glances to the glimmering scene.

"The passage-way to Hell is not so smooth; we go to a better place," he answered, without so much as turning his head.

We finally stopped at a line of massive elevators, ever in busy motion, carrying the throngs upward or downward.

As we paused, Blackana regarded me silently. I was then able, for the first time, to see his face clearly. No light reveals the countenance of a demon so well as the light of his own region.

I stood as if paralyzed under his awful eyes. Oh! thought I, can two orbs picture such infinite depth of remorse; such absence of tenderness; such barrenness of sympathy, far beyond the most care-worn look of earth? Then, pervading all these lineaments of despair were the positive characteristics of his nature—malice, envy, and hatred. These lent their repulsive fires to his eye, already overcharged with insidious gleamings.

I suddenly thought of my ten thousand, and my fears subsided.

"It were better for you to remain a stranger to the greater depth and go no farther," were the words that finally came from Blackana's scarcely moving lips.

"Fulfill your mission, Blackana! I fear not the deepest depth when I am thus equipped."

"Where is your sword and where is your armor?" he tauntingly asked.

"My steel is hid until I find a foe worthy of its mettle."

Blackana quivered and resumed his task. He told me that above us, deep in the bowels of these mountains, were the more refined legislative halls of Satan; while below us, at varying and terrible depths, lay scattered many a brooding station where the lowest laws of Hell are hatched.

"Let us go downward," I said, and scarcely had the words escaped my lips ere Blackana had ushered me into an elevator, holding me as we dropped down and down with increasing velocity, while a cold chill was freezing my heart, and my body playing the part of an aspen leaf.

Never before had I been touched by so dreadful a hand, but I thought again of the ten thousand, and that lent warmth to my heart and calmness to my nerves.

"To what great depth are we falling?" I soon ventured to ask, as I perceived that we were dashing downward at terrific speed.

"We fall to no great depth; we go only a thousand furlongs to reach the first grand level, not stopping at these lesser places of which you get a glimpse in passing."

"A thousand furlongs," I repeated, "down into the earth! Who ever heard of such a descent before?" But I still thought of my ten thousand, even though I could not conceive how they could follow me in such places.

"At what rate do we now travel?" I nervously asked, for I felt the hand of Blackana still pressing me down lest the great elevator would fall faster than my body.

"According to earthly reckoning we are falling twenty furlongs a second and our speed is still increasing with the descent," was the startling answer

I spoke no more, but found myself clutching the raised bars of the floor. I saw the glimmering light of many a region as we darted by at our lightning speed.

In an incredibly short time we reached the first grand level. Blackana led me forth from the elevator into an immense cavern whose dimensions were apparently as limitless as the space between the earth and sky. It was illumi-

nated by infernal lights and all astir with moving thousands in fabled dress and shape.

Never before had I imagined or beheld such a scene. Pure gold was as plentiful as the water of the earth, and was abundantly used in the construction of vast halls whose overarching vaults were encrusted with priceless gems that dazzled like jets of crystallized light.

"What weird world is this?" I asked in an awed tone.

"This is one of my master's legislative centers, devoted to each separate government on earth. The many legislators of this whole region are ever busily engaged in determining upon their policy and methods of operation, and in endeavoring to influence the law-making body of each government to create and modify laws in harmony with the underground legislation here enacted."

"Ah!" said I, "but this place is far from the surface where man dwells. How can there be such close connection?"

Blackana smiled as he made a wonderful revelation to me. "This strange empire is in close touch with the whole human family, for there are thousands of wires leading from this dark realm to each government centre of earth. Satan thus communicates his wishes to each law-

maker, of every land, who will lend a listening ear to his schemes."

Blackana then conducted me to an immense building divided into many sections. "Here is the electric centre of this level," he said.

As I gazed I learned the secret of Satan s power in law. Thousands were here engaged in conversing with legislators on earth.

I could understand no word of all these communications, for the section where I stood was devoted to Asiatic countries and the islands of the Pacific Ocean.

"Take me, O Blackana, to the section connecting with the Western world that I may see the very wires that run to the United States of America."

I soon stood in the interior of another large building, and with great interest listened to the operators communicating with some who were in authority at Washington, and with persons elsewhere who were interested in the formulation of laws for the whole country.

"Does this never cease?" I questioned.

"It continues through the days and nights of earth forever," came the reply.

I was looking at the intricate system of wires and the stupendous proportions of the place, when suddenly I heard some one mention a name with which I was familiar. I was attracted close

to the side of the operator that I might hear at least the one side of the conversation.

"That bill should never become a law," said the operator, but I could not hear the reply.

"Fight hard to defeat it. You will get heaps of gold if you succeed," were the next words I heard at the lower 'phone.

"Never mind them. I'll take care of that crowd. I will try once more to get their ear. I failed the last time, but I hope to succeed at my next endeavor." These words were spoken very plainly, but still I could hear no reply.

"Suppose the other element has chances to win. Get ready at once and meet the situation. Go and speak to the chairman of the committee and early influence his mind in our favor. Offer any bribe you wish, for we have unlimited resources at our command."

"If only I could hear the answer," thought I.

Then the operator listened a long time, and I almost envied his privilege, wishing that I might also hear the human voice from the earth's surface.

Blackana conducted me to other parts of the building, and I saw the fiendish program carried out at each point. Thousands of demons were in league with the law-makers of the world!

"Oh! that I could cut these wires and

restrict Satan's laws to these underground dominions," I said with rising boldness.

"Silence, puny mortal! Know you not that others can hear you speak? Would you here be crushed to death so far from the light of day?"

Superhuman strength moved me to answer thus: "Though all these hosts should hear me, I fear nothing. I am invincible, and should you take me to the deepest depths, amidst foul crawling imps, not one can harm me. Neither can you, Blackana.

"Come on," he sneered, "cease your senseless sentences and follow me."

I saw that Blackana endeavored to conceal the counter-currents of his heart, but nevertheless his agitation did not escape my notice.

Back to the elevators we went, and with a throng of evil spirits we entered the central car and fell another thousand furlongs into the depth of the earth.

We stopped at the second grand level into which I was ushered. I looked out over what seemed to be a new world with more light and more animation than was manifest on the first level.

Boisterous demonstrations were heard on every hand, all made more hideous by the variety of evil spirits who added their din to the general bedlam.

"What furious world is this ?" I shouted.

"This is Satan's political headquarters, and the place where his state laws are made. We are here connected with every state or divisional government in the world, and with every political movement that can be influenced by these underground voices."

My indignation leaped over all bounds as the vileness of these iniquitous schemes pressed upon me. I heard the bands of music from those who had prostituted their talent to the second level.

Blackana pushed me on through all the demonstrations, and then led me into a great structure more secluded than the electrical stations. Here the state laws are hatched, but, thanks to a higher sanctum, not all the brood see daylight.

The plotters of Hell sat in this underground legislative centre, and I saw, to my horror, some state legislators occupying seats in this infamous quarter.

Then said I to Blackana: "It is no more a mystery to me how so much of Hell is incorporated into the laws of the states in the country where I hold residence, as well as in all other parts of the world. How long have these things been ?"

"Since the beginning of law," was his indifferent reply.

"It will not be so forever," I prophesied under a sudden spell of inspiration. "The time must come when the power of this level will be blasted forever. The owner of the tree will burn the worms and their nests from every branch."

Then said Blackana tauntingly: "Neither flood, poison, fire, nor knife can ever destroy this section." Just as he spoke these words the whole edifice shook, and I heard a noise as if a shower of great stones had crashed into the roof and sides of the building. The legislators quaked with fear and all looked toward the ceiling. All of this instantly reminded me of the thousand lords who looked at the ominous handwriting on the wall at the feast of Belshazzar.

"Explain it to me," I asked as I looked wonderingly at Blackana.

"Urge it not, urge it not! Be content to dwell in ignorance!"

"I am here to learn, and I would know what force or power can so well-nigh destroy this wretched center. Tell me the truth. I demand it."

Then did Blackana move himself in his startling attitudes, as if loath to speak. He rolled his

heavy eyes as his discordant voice yielded the unwilling explanation.

"These are the votes that just fell in favor of reform in a campaign on earth. Such votes, under the panoply of prayer, strike more terror to these kingdoms than all else combined, and the most disastrous feature is that they go bounding from the buildings of this level ever downward and work their ruin from kingdom to kingdom, until they have wrought their havoc even to the lowest level. If we only knew the way to break the power of these votes, our comrades would not then dwell in constant dread of what might happen."

"May you never learn that power, and may the votes of good citizenship ever increase in number until these legislative halls shall be broken to rise no more, and their inmates driven from their secret machinations to the abode prepared for the Devil and his angels."

Blackana sprang at me in great rage.

"Silence, you contemptible mortal! You have not such liberty of speech here! Why fling insults into the face of one more powerful than yourself?"

"*Ho, ye ten thousand!*" I shouted with all my power, and Blackana fell backward at my evry words.

Sullen, but cowed, he arose to his feet and took me to the elevators.

"Where next?" he gruffly asked.

"What is on the next level below?" I inquired.

"Greater proceedings than on this one. It is devoted to the government of counties, cities, boroughs, and villages, and their political work."

"Pass it by and take me to the lowest level."

"You do not know what you ask. The lowest level is very, very deep, and takes us where things have no weight. It is the lowest haunt outside of Hell, inhabited by the vilest imps. How can you live or move in such a realm?"

"Not by the futile force of human power, but by the strength of Him who bids me go. I fear not, O Blackana; conduct me thither."

What an awful experience followed! I was taken down at an amazing speed, held under the great hand of Blackana. We passed region after region of infernal lights, each one existing for the purpose of carrying out its part of Satan's fiendish plan.

At length we stopped in the red glare of an awful burning amidst a company of hobgoblins out of harmony with all human shape or symmetry.

"This must be the bed of Hell, indeed," I said, after I had conquered my rising fears.

"Far from it, far from it!" answered Blackana. "We are now in the lowest legislative center *where foul fiends invent the horrible laws of personal pollution in the mortal body, and political bribery in the civil body.*"

Blackana held me by the hand. I seemed not to walk but rather to move along without effort, seeing the pictures of lowest life and ill-shaped spirits, some of monster size.

Into an immense auditorium I was wafted, a building without foundations or floor. Here, amidst uncanny noises, hovered a vast throng of Satan's lowest legislators.

The dreadful suggestions here given, and the terrible debates that followed, beggar human description. From all parts of the great hall the busy wires were communicating with every section of the earth's surface.

Blackana, still holding me by the hand, spoke thus in a derisive strain :

"O mortal, now comes my glorious revenge I have tasted your insults until their galling bitterness grinds me still. I have craved for this hour when I might leave you to the mercy of the lowest, and bring you under my feet for ever."

Then, turning to the chairman of the great assemblage, Blackana attracted his attention,

and at once the attention of all the spectral monsters of the place.

"Here," commenced he, "is a piece of mortal flesh, fresh from the surface. I have been forced, by some strange power, to conduct this mortal man through these nether levels until he has seen the workings of our underground plans and schemes. He must never see the light of day, lest the world above may know the true inwardness and source of such laws as are called cursed, and rise in hosts against our surface operations."

At this Blackana thrust me forward, and I went straightway to the chairman who seized me by the back and held me aloft in his right hand, while a deafening roar of strident voices was measuring my doom.

"*Ho, ye ten thousand!*" I cried aloud, at which the horrid chairman fell backward, and I dropped unharmed to his own chair as the whole host were rushing at me *en masse.*

The chairman sprang to his feet and waved a wand. "Silence and order!" he commanded.

Thousands of brandishing weapons were brought to a stand, and quietness reigned in a moment.

"Why say you 'ten thousand'? What power lives in those words?" asked the chairman with a show of boldness, but in secret quaking.

"Power unlimited, even over death, hell, and the grave. My flesh is not food for such as these."

"Who can you be to talk thus boldly to your superiors?"

"I am one who is sealed by the blood of Jesus, and have no superiors outside the gates of Heaven."

"Why came you here?" he impatiently and furiously demanded. "Tell me while yet you have opportunity to speak."

Then, fully confiding in my unseen Guard, I stood erect and said with boldness of speech: "I have come to learn the secrets of this underground legislation which is sending its blighting curse throughout the world. Having witnessed the wide extent of these secret operations, I will now return to the brotherhood of man and sound the alarm of a coming reformation. O, beware ye multitudes that now rise against me! I am not alone, nor forsaken. By faith I see armies of the living God. I declare, at this moment, that earth will not forever receive her laws from such a depth. The hour must come when these million wires will be broken beyond repair, and all you fiends go groveling under penal chains in darkness eternal."

No more could I speak, for the air was thickening all around me with a rush of wild

The armies of righteousness will some day triumph over the black hordes of civil iniquity.

demons whose threatening weapons thirsted for my blood.

I stood motionless, glorying in the power of the Unseen, for I saw, shining far above me, a beautiful star of hope with peace and purity in its rays.

In the same instant I again shouted, "*Ho, ye ten thousand!*" Oh, what a transformation took place! Regiment upon regiment of Heaven's military hosts, converging as from infinite depth of space, burst into sudden view, revealed by a dazzling light which filled the whole region and dazed the infernal hosts as with blindness, while their weapons broke and fell beneath them in futile fragments.

CHAPTER VII.

The Hill of Remorse.

1. While climbing a steep hill Miss Church-Member is touched by Remorse.

2. Satan's strategy in keeping her away from the Narrow Path.

3. All her trouble is lost in company with Mr. World on the Mountain Top of Apathy.

RETURNING to my former post of observation, and looking again through the open door, I beheld Mr. World and Miss Church-Member still riding on the gravity road. They were approaching the Shadowy Vale, and Mr. World was desirous that his friend should close her eyes until they had passed through the shadows.

She reclined her head, and soon was resting so comfortably that she fell fast asleep and opened not her eyes until they had passed beyond the darker scenes of the miserable valley.

Then did Mr. World engage her with artful and pleasant conversation, so that she might not fully observe the features that constantly make this part of the Broad Highway dark and dreary.

Satan, unseen, hovered around them during

their conversation which was well pleasing to him. At length, in partial disguise, he made himself visible, much to the terror of Miss Church-Member.

"Fear not; no harm will befall you," said Mr. World re-assuringly as he laid his hand upon her shoulder.

Satan smiled complaisantly, and spoke in soft tones: "Tremble not at my presence. I have come only to render you such assistance as may be especially helpful to you in your journey, and to disabuse your mind of such false impressions as you have evidently entertained concerning my character."

So affable was his manner and so pleasing his address that, to her mind, he soon lost that shocking hideousness which characterized his first appearance, and evoked from Miss Church-Member this apology born of her guilty conscience: "You would not have seen me now on this path had Mr. World adhered strictly to his promises."

"Indeed, Miss Church-Member," replied Satan, "you need have no regret for being here. You are to be congratulated upon the good judgment which led you into fellowship with Mr. World. It is your happy fortune that he has succeeded in preventing you from leaving him. You are an exception to a host of cranks, who,

without investigation, are prejudiced by what they hear. You are broad-minded, independent, and will be found wiser and happier than the army of fools you have left."

These words brought a mixture of pride and shame to her heart, and threw her mind into a state of great confusion.

But by this time they had come to a long and steep hill called Remorse up which all pilgrims walked. Mr. World assisted his companion in alighting, and promised to give her all possible help in her efforts to climb the hill.

Satan remained with them, and Miss Church-Member, under deepening remorse of conscience, loitered a few steps in the rear. Her bowed head indicated the warring of her thoughts. Then I saw that she cast a longing glance over the rough hills toward the King's Highway, and looked for some path by which she might go thither.

Her two wily companions endeavored to allay her fears by offering all manner of cajolements, none of which either diverted or quieted her mind.

"O ye friends of mine!" cried Miss Church-Member, "I can find rest only on yonder King's Highway. Can you show me the shortest path leading thereto? I cannot go to the summit of this hill."

On the Hill of Remorse.

Miss Church-Member cast a longing glance toward the King's Highway, and looked for some path by which she might go thither.

"It so happens," pleasantly replied the Devil, "that there is no way of reaching the so-called King's Highway from this part of our route, but, if you will have patience, we will conduct you safely to a point a little farther on where you can conveniently leave this way with all honor to yourself. In the meantime we will give you all the assistance that you may need, and every convenience that science can afford."

Miss Church-Member wept tears of gratitude at this proffered kindness, and began to feel that this dark intruder was a friend with a rough exterior but a warm and congenial heart.

"It is quite evident that you have been grossly misrepresented to me," she faltered as her voice trembled with emotion. "I was told that you are the embodiment of envy, malice, and hatred, and vigorously opposed to everything religious."

Satan looked at her in well-counterfeited amazement. "How wrongly I am judged by my enemies! How can I be opposed to all religion when I attend church and prayer-meeting regularly, and sedulously listen to the sermons and prayers while many sleep who claim to be better than I? You will pardon me, Miss Church-Member," he continued, "but allow me to bear the light burden you are carrying under your arm, and let us hasten from this sickly

atmosphere to the refreshing air beyond the summit of the hill."

"You are very kind, indeed," she said. "Please carry these books carefully, as I prize them very highly."

As they pushed their way up the hill, I looked at Blackana who, with his eyes fixed upon me, sat as cold and motionless as a statue.

"Tell me," I asked, "why Satan has falsified so greatly to Miss Church-Member."

Blackana, with a show of uneasiness, answered interrogatively: "Wherein has he falsified?"

"Did he not just inform Miss Church-Member that there is no way of reaching the King's Highway from the place where she had been standing? He well knew that there is a way opened by the Prince of the House of David. Why did he not tell her?"

Blackana again grinned horribly while my indignation waxed stronger. Then came his pertinent reply: "My master is about his own business; that is why he is so successful in his work. It is not his business to point people away from his kingdom; his delight is rather in leading them upon his own Highway."

"Oh! for the voice of a thousand trumpets, that I might reach the ear of Miss Church-Member, and break unto her the words of truth and

life. See how she walks on between those two fiends, ever nearing an awful destruction, yet vainly imagining, through the deceitfulness of her advisers, that she is nearing the place where she can, with greater ease, leave her present course and join her comrades on the Shining Path. Oh, that I could send a messenger, good and swift, in her pursuit!"

"Rest in ease, anxious mortal; she will get all necessary advice from her two friends," replied Blackana with a sardonic grin.

I could no longer look into his face, for I was filled with contempt. I turned my eyes to see poor Miss Church-Member still struggling up the Hill of Remorse.

When the top was finally reached I heard Mr. World congratulating her: "Well done, noble woman! You have fought Remorse until you have mastered it. The pains and pangs incident to this climbing are over, and if you should come to another hill you will ascend it with more ease. Look about you at these cool mountain resorts called Apathy, and join me in a needed recreation as we mingle with the merry multitudes amongst these shady bowers."

She needed no second invitation, being glad to seek relief in forgetfulness of her guilt.

As they went to their pleasures, Satan vanished to give attention to others who were

ascending the same Hill of Remorse, some in a sullen mood and some with wails of anguish on their lips.

The delightful resorts of Apathy were now quieting the mind of Miss Church-Member, for the attractions on the mountain top were so numerous and so ingeniously arranged that, as she gave full attention to them, she no longer suffered any pangs of remorse.

On this plateau, so full of charms for every sense, I saw bands of music; gardens of shady retreat where one might while away the weary hours in gentle dalliance; and cooling fountains throwing forth their busy sprays.

Artists were painting the scenes of worldly ease, and poets were writing sweet verses for the singers of the place.

Miss Church-Member, who was a lover of the fine arts, asked Mr. World to tarry in one of the gardens of the poets where they might hear the songs of the season just from the pens of their authors.

This was a novel privilege; so he readily consented and accompanied her into a garden near by. They were greeted by sounds of instrumental music and charming voices raised in song.

After these harmonies died away a soloist

sang a hymn that had been composed that same day. Her voice rendered each word distinctly:

Remorse is but the foe of all,
The rich and poor, the slave and free.
Unfriendly comes its bitter call—
Perchance it comes this day to thee.

Then come, thou troubled seeking peace
From this unkind, intruding foe;
Let anxious cares no more increase;
Go bury all thy pangs of woe.

Forget the things that wake thy mind
To fleeting sorrows of the day;
Oh! come and be forever blind
To all except this Broader Way.

Then followed a fiendish woman, in guise of a light-crowned angel, who delivered an address entitled "The True Peace of the World." While the applause which followed her remarks was dying away, an authoritative old gentleman arose. After standing a moment in dignified silence, he continued to carry out the program of the Devil by speaking on "False Lights from the so-called 'King's Highway.'"

Next a quartette beautifully rendered a love song of the world; this also had been quite recently composed.

Sweet world, so bright and fair,
We would thy pleasures share
While days pass on.
Thou art our truest friend,
On thee our souls depend
Till life is gone.

In life's perplexing days,
Thou wilt, in every phase,
Be ever near.
While thy sweet, placid charms
Dispel our dread alarms
In times of fear.

Who else can give relief,
When bowed in heavy grief?
No one like thee.
Thou sendest rays of light,
Into our darkest night
Till shadows flee.

The melody of this song and the sentiment of its words had a very decisive effect on Miss Church-Member. She looked into the eyes of Mr. World with more than poetry in her glance, for her heart was now thrilled with the first touches of true love for him.

CHAPTER VIII.

The Valley of Temptation.

1. In this valley the two great Highways run almost parallel.

2. The intervening ground is all alive with Satan's schemes to entice, entrap and discourage Christians.

3. The operation of Christian forces in this valley.

AFTER leaving the Hill of Remorse and the pleasure grounds of Apathy, Mr. World and Miss Church-Member proceeded on the Broad Highway which now gradually sloped toward a deep valley.

"What is the name of the valley which we are now entering?" inquired Miss Church-Member.

"'Tis but the Valley of Temptation," he carelessly answered.

"Ah! I have heard of this valley," she replied. "Whenever I was tempted or tried on the King's Highway some one would caution: 'Be courageous, for you must go through the Valley of Temptation.' I am thankful, as I come to it, that I am on a Broader Way."

"Many call this valley 'Entanglement,'" further continued Mr. World, "because of the large numbers who are here caught by the devices all along the way."

I saw the whole valley in one view. It was very wide and more than a thousand experiences long and, from one end to the other, there were constant scenes of activity. The King's Highway and the Broad Highway ran almost parallel throughout the whole length of the valley.

The entire space between the two paths was occupied by the agents of Satan, and by numerous rescue bands and missionary organizations of the King's Highway Church.

I was informed that no traveler, who knows the experiences of life, ever escaped this valley. But the King of Glory gives his children assurance of no harm if they will heed his words and step not from the path upon any pretence. He has also placed, in plain view, countless signs of warning to keep his pilgrims from yielding to temptation, as it presents itself, with or without mask; and they who pass these testing-places in triumph are counted stable in their ways.

I saw in the first part of the valley some of Satan's shrewdest agents at work. They were stationed along the Narrow Path at close intervals, and were endeavoring, by all kinds of schemes, to attract the attention of Christians as they journeyed through the valley.

From one point they threw a hook baited with wealth over to the edge of the King's High-

way. I saw an ambitious Christian, contrary to the signs of warning and all advice, eagerly grasp this bait. Then did the agents of Satan pull gently. The man seeing a clue to wealth in his hand would not let it go, and so was drawn slowly and unconsciously over into the territory of the World. He did not see the strand that drew him, for it was invisible, nor was he conscious of being thus drawn, having his mind so fixed upon the object of his earnest pursuit.

Thus do these agents ply their nefarious skill without ceasing, and so have drawn large numbers away from their original faith.

Another agent I saw near-by throwing out a hook baited with fame. An ambitious youth let go all he had and seized the baited hook with singular avidity. It inspired him with inward hope, and he became so engaged in thinking of his golden future that he followed whither the gentle drawing led him, until he also reached the questionable ground of the World. There he became still further entangled until he was utterly under the sway of the tempter.

Close by I saw an agent of the Devil fastening a book to a line and throwing it to the edge of the King's Highway. In bold letters it bore the title, "Forbidden Fruit," and under this title there was an impure picture.

Many, in passing by, who saw the book

would have examined it had it not been for their modesty.

But one man, whose curiosity was stronger than his judgment, took the book and commenced perusing it. While thus engaged the invisible strands of influence drew the captive from the Narrow Way until he found a series of books and illustrations to enchain his attention, and Satan succeeded in totally winning his heart.

I saw another book thrown to the edge of the Pilgrim's Path. This was taken by a woman who opened its pages and saw its evil tendencies. Although drawn by the invisible chord, she did not step from the path, but threw the book as far to one side as she could, and proceeded on her journey happily singing:

"Yield not to temptation,
For yielding is sin.
Each vict'ry will help you
Some other to win."

This only enraged the wily foes, and they became more determined than ever to continue their work of deception and ruin.

From one point or another I saw this dreadful work progressing. Each station used a different kind of bait, pleasing or attractive to some passing pilgrims.

Here the enemy reaps a continual harvest notwithstanding all the preaching, advice, and influence brought to bear upon pilgrims to induce them to eschew all attractions not plainly found upon their own pathway.

Some, whom Satan could not attract by a bait, he would catch with snares, many of which I saw in operation, each guarded continually by trusted servants of the Evil One.

One of the subtlest of these snares consisted of a series of small, curiously shaped buildings. They stood as near to the King's Highway as Satan could place them, while glaring signs informed the pilgrims that they could here obtain knowledge upon any subject. Each building was so constructed that, at the will of a secret operator, it could be moved noiselessly from its resting place.

Many an unsuspecting traveler who craved for a solution to some mystery would step into one of these neat rooms, and meet with a most cordial reception.

I saw a man of more than usual intelligence, who had been faithful to his Master, stop and read the sign over these buildings: "Bureau of Information: All Mysteries Solved."

"Here," thought he, "in this humble place I can perhaps find some pearls of thought which

more inviting waters never yielded to me." He stepped in, not noticing that he thereby stepped to one side of the way.

"Can I have a mystery solved here?" asked the visitor.

"Without doubt, sir," was the confident response of a dignified professor who was in attendance.

"Can you tell me the origin of sin?" asked the visitor.

Just then I saw the building commence to move as the professor commenced to explain the difficult question.

The professor talked so interestingly to the visitor that he held his attention until the building was moved, by the secret process, to the brow of the mountain, and over to the great building known as the "Devil's Theological School."

"Perchance, my words," said the speaker, "are insufficient to fully satisfy your mind. Go now from the rear door to the College where all such perplexing questions are made clear."

The visitor seizing, as he thought, a golden opportunity, gladly consented and, to his great surprise, found a building of magnificent proportions into which he entered.

After listening a very short time to Satan's teaching on the origin of sin, he emerged from

the school with a heavy bundle of opinions on his back, and failed to find the Old Way. After wandering and stumbling about on this summit of human learning, he finally found the Broad Highway whereon he could carry his vain burden with ease.

These bureaus of information have ensnared so many learned men, including ministers and professors, that the King of Glory has here placed special signs of warning to all travelers; these have saved many men from the snare of "the fowler."

I saw three young college students about to enter one of the bureaus. There stood an aged pilgrim near by who shouted:

"Come! ye young men, out of the snare of the Devil, or ye will be taken captive by him at his will!"

The voice sounded so friendly that they hesitated long enough to discern that the building did not touch the King's Highway.

Then they remembered that they had been told long before to go by the King's Highway, and not to turn to the right hand nor to the left, nor even to step from the path, lest they should slip and fall to their hurt. So they passed on about their Father's business.

Near the edge of the King's Highway I saw another device to catch men unawares. It was

invented in the Wizard City and had been successfully used by Satan for many centuries.

It was an *artificial woman*, dressed in modest apparel, and so constructed that the arms were uplifted and the heart plainly visible, making the curious image just unnatural enough to attract the attention of all pilgrims.

Over the head of the image these words were written: "Touch this magic heart for the charms that follow."

It was ridiculous to see how many of the young and old, in passing over this way of life, stepped from the path and tried the experiment.

One man I saw who ventured to touch the mystic heart, and ere his eyes could look into the face of the image its arms embraced him in a tightening grasp.

Away the image moved with graceful ease into Elysian bowers of sensual joy. There he remained to breathe its poisoned air and feed upon the husks of such a clime.

I also saw a man of riper years who looked curiously at another image similar to the one that had just moved away. At first he was doubtful whether to test it or not, and as he stood in consideration he raised his eyes and saw these words plainly written over the King's Highway :—

TO ALL DESCENDANTS OF ADAM:

Beware, O pilgrim, of this woman's heart,
Lest you should from the Narrow Way depart;
For if you touch a secret chord within,
You're borne away to wider fields of sin.

He read this sign a few times and also heard the voice of a good friend who told him that he had seen thousands go to ruin by not heeding this warning. Nevertheless he was urged by curiosity and carnality, and being hardened by former acts of disobedience and seeing nothing but innocent pleasure before him, he yielded to his baser desires.

"O! rescue me, Mr. Law, I am in the clutches of this woman," was his beseeching cry, not long after. But I saw that no one came to his help.

There were many such places in this valley where men, both young and old, were enticed; many of whom could not have been caught by the snares of vice at other places along the Broad Highway.

I saw also, farther down the valley, that Satan used all manner of traps and nets to catch the silly and the foolish. That which attracted my attention the most was a series of stations built close to the King's Highway. At each place Satan employed a company of expert men who were trained to use a lasso.

I saw certain men and women of the King's Highway who became so inflated with their own vanity and imaginations that they rose head and shoulder above their humbler comrades, thus enabling the lasso of Pride to get hold of them. Some, by heeding advice, escaped; others submitted to the drawing power and landed in the kingdoms of the World where they could worship their new god with increasing ardor.

There was also a certain young man who doted so much on his own ways that his head rose unusually high. He was, therefore, easily caught by a lasso called Conceit. Good friends came to his rescue and told him to realize at once that he was nothing, and thereby he would suddenly become so small that he would drop completely out of his trouble.

But he said that he could not believe a lie, whereat the lasso tightened still more about his neck, and he succeeded by still further struggling to remain a very brief time on the King's Highway; but being in pain, he soon yielded to the inevitable and went to worship before the shrine of his own god.

I also saw that the women of the King's Highway were an exceeding great army, mighty in battling against the foe, much to the discomfiture of Satan and his allies.

To counteract the influence of this sex Satan

has plied his ingenuity ever since the beginning. In his Pharaoh fashion he has so manipulated the customs of the world that woman is trampled under foot in uncivilized lands, and in lands of light she is ostracized by sections of the Christian church and despised in the civil realm. And yet, with a faithful heart, she suffers this indignity and, looking up from underneath this weight, she offers to the powers that crush her down the holiest sacrifice that one can give.

> O spirit of the age, like flowers of Heaven,
> Thy fragrance will not die, but live eternal;
> And woman shall, some holier, happier day,
> Attain her highest glory in the world.

Yet notwithstanding all these means wherewith Satan has made the path of woman so hard to travel, he has discovered that he can not disgrace her by any means so effectually as through the old temptation.

Consequently Satan has kept the seed of the central tree of the garden and still raises, on the broad uplands of Hell, *forbidden fruit* which, through engrafting processes, has come to many varieties.

This mysterious product of the tree, so suited to the natural palate of womankind, is provided abundantly on each side of the King's Highway

along the whole length of the Valley of Temptation, and is offered, ostensibly, free of charge.

I watched, with chagrin and horror, the subtle influences of this fiendish work, seeing young women and those of riper experience go down alike under this intoxication of Hell.

As I looked again at the whole Valley, what sad sights of intemperance painfully greeted my eyes!

The intervening ground was a veritable bed of iniquity, for it swarmed with half-clothed inebriates who patronized the miserable and filthy hovels of lowest resort, while inebriates, in finer array, entered the apartments which were decorated and finished in all the beauty that wealth could afford, and supplied with alcoholic beverages under a fashionable bill of fare.

I could see the same Devil controlling all, and the same gutter or the same Hell receiving all who did not yield to the agencies of eternal life.

Among the many temperance organizations that operated throughout the valley I observed a band of women who threatened to overthrow the evil. They had, by long persistent effort, discovered the underground connections between the distillery and the saloons, and therefore they were endeavoring to kill the traffic at the head.

This movement at first created laughter in the ranks of the foe, but the women have continued patiently and have built a thousand batteries from which they hurl projectiles of death into the camp of intemperance. Since then the agents of darkness have ceased their laughter and instead have set to building defences behind which they hope to carry on their business with impunity.

But the bands of women have entered into an eternal agreement, pledged their faith one to another, and have been calling upon Heaven for help; therefore they declare that no flag will be lowered, and no gun will be silent until the great wall around the city of their foes shall fall, either at a long blast of the horn or a continuous volley from their ramparts.

CHAPTER IX.

The Tower of Temptation.

1. The tower affords the most advantageous view of the world and a most discouraging view of the King's Highway.

2. The triumphant flight of Mrs. Discouraged from the tower's top to a place on the King's Highway called "Victory by Faith."

3. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member ride from the tower's top in Satan's new air ship.

MR. WORLD and Miss Church-Member continuing on the Broad Highway, entered the Valley of Temptation with all its gaiety and outward happiness.

This valley is known by the pilgrims of the King's Highway as the Devil's Heaven, for here the tinsel of the world, the pomp of society, and the wealth of material grandeur are manifested in all their glory.

"An exceedingly pleasant valley," said Mr. World as they drew nearer to the scenes of activity on each side of the way.

"Beyond my anticipation, indeed. Our journey is growing more and more delightful," she joyously replied.

As they journeyed on Miss Church-Member came into agreeable followship with some of her former Christian associates who, by looking over

into the territory of the World, coveted its ways and were snared by one or another of Satan's devices to catch the unwary. The larger portion of these new recruits were firmly convinced that they were still traveling on the road to Heaven, even though they had fully left the Narrow Way.

Miss Church-Member congratulated her comrades of earlier years on their happy choice of a wider and more pleasant path, and they accepted her invitation to spend a season together in the valley.

These new associates were welcomed most cordially by Mr. World who left nothing undone that might add to their comfort or pleasure.

The merry company passed down the valley and paused at a magnificent temperance saloon which occupied nearly the whole space between the two Highways. Into this place of attractive rooms I saw many enter from the King's Highway, much to the displeasure of their great Master.

In this infernal guise Satan seduces many an unsuspecting traveler to take one more step downward toward the lowest service of his kingdom. Mr. World courteously offered refreshments and conducted his friends into the "Ladies' Parlor" where they drank alleged unfermented wines, and admired the sculpture and works of art which adorned the place. They

were then offered their choice of porter, sweet cider, root beer, hot punch (special for a cold), or eggnog for a weak heart. Thus each one was enabled to find a beverage directly suited to his need or taste, for some had contracted a cold, while others were suffering with cardiac troubles.

Not far from this respectable place, and connected secretly therewith, stood a group of buildings patronized by the lower order of criminals and inebriates. These haunts bore a black reputation.

Mr. World and his joyous companions, by reason of their refined natures and good standing in the church, would not so much as look at such despicable resorts, but continued their journey until they came to a wider section of the valley where they saw numberless rescue bands at work, but especially a great army of Endeavorers presenting a formidable front.

"Whence came this company so great that it cannot be numbered?" asked Mr. World in a state of nervous agitation.

One of the new companions quickly answered: "They come from the King's Highway and are trying to capture the kingdom of this world and bring it into subjection to God. I know all about them and can testify that they are a mighty and glorious band."

The regiments of this great host were marching on, each soldier equipped with the full panoply of his station. Many of the pilgrims on the Broad Highway trembled at the presence of so powerful an army. It has caused the enemy much concern how to meet and, if possible, conquer this foe. This army of Endeavorers constantly grows and, according to the claims of the enemy, the most successful plans to oppose it are not yet matured. Satan has promised his forces that he would utterly rout these daring legions as soon as some new inventions of war can be perfected.

The merry companions, not being moved with anger, endured the gigantic display of this host without chagrin.

Mr. World quieted his rising fears and urged his comrades onward past the Tobacco Station until they reached the centre of the valley where the King's Highway was the roughest, and the Broad Highway the smoothest.

Here was built the most remarkable structure of the valley. A high tower of imposing strength occupied the whole space between the two highways. Its foundations were broad and totally covered the King's Highway with a massive arch.

This was known amongst Christians as the Devil's Tower, or Tower of Temptation. It was

built by Satan, and was said to afford the finest view of the world to all who would consent to take a ride upward in its electric carriage.

The location of the tower was perfectly adapted to the purpose intended. Scarcely any pilgrims *en route* for Heaven passed by without taking a view of the sights.

Before this mountain was built, a high mountain-cliff, on one side of the valley, was used by the agents of darkness for the same purpose.

Thereon David ascended and saw the prosperity of the wicked until envy filled his soul, and his "steps had well-nigh slipped." Had it not been that by faith he looked to a mountain far away, and understood the end of the prosperous worldly minded, he might have there fallen to his death.

Upon this mountain Satan took Christ, the Son of God, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, and said unto him: "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

From this tower Judas saw the wealth of the world, and there was begotten within him an inordinate craving for earthly gain which at last dragged him down to a miserable end.

As time rolled on, Satan erected this magnificent tower higher than the loftiest crag of the mountain.

I saw that Mr. World and his companions were looking at the exterior finish of the tower, after which they stepped to the base and spent some time in watching the many schemes that were employed to induce disheartened Christians to take the Broad Highway after descending the tower.

They saw that one of the most successful of these schemes was a series of little offices occupied by fortune tellers of reputed ability. In one of these they saw an old woman with a mysterious face. She professed to be able, by her strange conjuring, to reveal the future of any life.

A certain Mr. Downcast, who was a church-member and had just come from the top of the tower, visited this fortune teller, and by her descriptions of his happy future on the Broad Highway he was induced to travel thereon at once.

Mr. World and his companions decided to get the benefit of the broad view which could be had from the top of the tower. They entered a car at the base and were delighted by the gentle ascent toward the clouds.

Upon reaching the top of the tower they were approached by an obliging attendant and furnished with spy glasses of great power with which they could see more distinctly the beauty

and greatness of the world, and the roughness and inconvenience of traveling the King's Highway. *To each one was also given an ingenious pocket mirror in which could be seen, at any time, the inconsistencies of church-members.*

I saw throngs of people circling the top of the tower, and many evil agents busily engaged in the interest of their master.

There had just come from the King's Highway a group of church-members upon whom the scenery had a doleful effect. Some were filled with melancholy, and some were sullen, while despondency sent germs of slow death into other minds.

These conditions enabled Satan to destroy more easily all hope within them of ever succeeding on a way that appeared more rugged than ever, and also made them more desirous to taste the joys of this present life which now lay before them in such a winning way.

I then saw one called Mrs. Discouraged who had never before seen so much of the world at once. She stood on the edge of the tower not far from Mr. World and his companions, and listened to one of the polite attendants who had given her also a spy glass.

Mrs. Discouraged looked down upon the natural comforts of life which were here seen to best advantage. She saw, with ease, the

Broad Highway presenting a picture of happiness as far as the glass could reach.

Then did one of the smooth-tongued attendants speak to another group of pilgrims who also had just come from the King's Highway.

"Witness the glory of the Broad Highway and see how it goes down this valley ever into finer stretches of country. See on yonder distant elevations that magnificent University of the World built at an enormous cost and sacrifice for the accommodation of all travelers. Each one of you who reaches the lower end of this valley should take the Mountain Trolley and spend a season at those schools. They occupy some of the grandest buildings in the world. Focus your glasses and behold the great sight."

Continuing he said: "The path you see leading down there, in this other part of the valley, is called King's Highway, very rough indeed, as you all can see. Thereon it is hard to travel and difficult to stand still. It is so narrow that if a traveler should stand still, he is constantly harassed or pushed about by those who wish to pass on. The other highway furnishes a marked contrast, for there a person may stand still without annoyance to himself or anyone else. The way is so wide that he can even sit on an easy chair and yet not be in

the way of others who wish to hasten on. The one who built this Wider Way kept in mind the convenience and comfort of travelers.

"The so-called King's Highway," still continued the attendant, "is beset with many dangers, and passes through many places similar to the one far down the valley." They all looked through their glasses and saw the Meshes of Doubt on each side of the Narrow Way.

"Those are the sorts of places," concluded the speaker, "that one must constantly pass through in the service of an imaginary king."

Mrs. Discouraged saw all these things and heard all these words. She was so disheartened that she knew not what to do.

"Have I served my God in vain?" she questioned inwardly. "Must all my testimonies fall to the earth? Surely the way of the world seems to be an easy way, and more suited to a person in trouble."

She suddenly fell on her knees, as she was wont to do in such emergencies, and, behold, I saw her, on wings of prayer, fly in triumph from the tower's top, down the valley, over the Meshes of Doubt, and land on the King's Highway in a most glorious place called Victory by Faith. She thence went on her way rejoicing.

Then did the attendant on the tower speak

The great victory of Mrs. Discouraged who, on wings of prayer, escaped from the Tower of Temptation to a place called Victory by Faith.

of her in ridicule. "The poor mortal, in her insanity, has descended to a bad level and must, of necessity, climb yonder terrible hill which, as your eyes bear testimony, is the last part of the Narrow Way visible from this tower."

"She went, however, in a miraculous way. Those wings were sure and steady, and I was pleased with the swiftness of her flight," said Mrs. Diligence who was also a pilgrim from the King's Highway.

"Without doubt," answered the attendant, "but she went with heavy labor of her wings. Had she told me that she wished to take a flight, I could have given her a finer trip in one of the aerial ships lately invented by the experts of the Wizard City. I will summon one. Look no more at Mrs. Discouraged with wings, but fix your eyes toward the east, and you will soon witness the floating car whereon thousands go out daily from this tower into pleasant places."

As he said this he gave a signal, and soon the strangely shaped airship came in sight, to the delight of all who saw it.

"It must be far better," said one of the spectators, "to travel in a car like that, than to be working your wings in the air."

"A thing of beauty." "The greatest invention of the century." "It moves as easily as a

bird," were some of the various sentences that were spoken enthusiastically as the object drew nearer.

"Shall we ride in it?" quickly asked Mr. World as he turned to the little group at his side.

The new companions who so recently came from the King's Highway timorously fell back at his abrupt suggestion, but Miss Church-Member offered to accompany him.

As the aerial machine was stopping at the tower Mr. World and Miss Church-Member speedily exchanged words of farewell and prepared for the new ride.

They were soon numbered with a host of expectant passengers on board. The lines were loosened and the weird airship cut the wind like a large bird on wing, and sped away to the pleasure grounds along the Broad Highway where most of the passengers, being blinded by sin, found such delightsome fellowship that they refused thereafter to travel on any other than the Wider Way.

CHAPTER X.

Dark Schemes of Satan.

1. The two companions land far down the valley on "The Midway," whence they take the Mountain Trolley and visit the underground Schools of Suicide.

2. Satan's primitive address on Literature.

THE aerial car carried Mr. World and Miss Church-Member to the far end of the Valley of Temptation where they spent a delightful season in the pleasures of sense and sight.

They lingered mostly on the wide intervening space between the two paths which was known in this part of the valley as "The Midway." Here they saw a large number of pilgrims from the King's Highway who were engaging in one or another of the endless amusements which can be enjoyed without stepping altogether on the Broad Highway.

On this long Midway humanity swarmed by millions. Some, forgetful of their vows, or regardless of their honor, stepped into the lower haunts of vice, and offered sweet flowers of purity and fragrance in exchange for dry and filthy husks from the floor of the stall. But Miss Church-Member, in keeping with her moral character, did not surrender her chastity, and although she had such continual

fellowship with Mr. World she yet held the respect of many other church-members; for it was quite fashionable to belong to the church and still walk in the ways of the world. Satan, under a hellish guise, offered to give, even before death, handsome rewards to any church-member who succeeds in carrying a certain amount of the world with him on his way to Heaven, and multitudes were trying the experiment. Some, in hope of winning larger prizes, were verily loaded down with the worrying weights of the world.

Looking away from this immediate vicinity of the valley, any traveler could see, far above the surrounding scenes, the "University of the World," whose front buildings crested the mountain elevations for many miles. This imposing sight had awakened the admiration of Mr. World and his friend, and had it not been for the countless attractions of the Midway they would have hurriedly pushed their way to the schools, immediately after the aerial car had carried them over the proud domes of the University and landed them in the vale.

During one of the darker periods which now and then cover the whole Midway with its shadows, the two companions caught the flashes of variously-colored lights which emanated from every part of the elevated structure,

making the entire mountain appear as if a vast crown of nature were decked with dazzling diamonds rare.

Miss Church-Member was excited by this unusual show of brilliancy, and nothing on the lower level could any longer hold her attention.

"How can we best rise to that glorious summit?" she inquired with a glow of enthusiasm.

"Ah," smiled Mr. World, "surely we need not think of walking up this mountain. Have you forgotten the obliging attendant who advised us as we stood on the beautiful tower? Did he not direct us to take the Mountain Trolley?"

Without delay they sought the Midway station, entered one of the up-to-date cars, and instead of going directly to the mountain top they were surprised to find that they were being carried into the bowels of the mountain.

"Whence go we dashing through the dark?" asked the terror-stricken Miss Church-Member as she held fast to Mr. World.

But ere her escort could answer they came into an immense cavern dimly lighted. The car stopped at a station called Rest, and a voice announced in distinct tones: "Come, ye troubled or distressed, and ye who are disgraced! Here

linger in this underground school and learn of the rest that is for the weary."

"What is your wish?" courteously asked Mr. World.

"I am neither in trouble nor in disgrace. Why should I tarry?"

"Only to see the lower schools before we go to the higher," was his winning answer.

They alighted and walked forth in the dismal light. They could readily discern strangely shaped buildings of a costly type. The air was stifling, and everything wore a melancholy dress; yet, withal, there was a pleasing charm about the place. Some secret touch in the doleful music, or some bright tinge to the ominous shadows, awakened a curiosity and a hope in the visitors that prevented them from leaving the cavern at once.

In a half-decided mood Mr. World and Miss Church-Member meandered through this sickly region, and had decided to leave the place when they saw this illuminated motto over a massive arch:

TO ALL WHO ARE DISGRACED!
THE SHORTEST ROUTE TO REST!
(ENTRANCE.)

A genial attendant informed Mr. World that visitors were welcome, but Miss Church-Member consented to enter only after some

hesitancy. It was indeed a dark school, with long narrow halls where one could only see the darker side of life. Everything about the place evidenced the dark designs of Satan. The teachers in this infamous place, by a series of graded instructions, suggested to their pupils that suicide was the surest and shortest road to rest. In the darker rooms of the rear I saw, to my horror, a scene that neither Mr. World nor Miss Church-Member was permitted to see. *It was the daily graduating class of this school of suicide.* Each member of the class was instructed by what new method he might rend the strand of life with his own hand, in the desperate and sickening hope of finding rest "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."

I quickly turned from this revolting spectacle, and saw that Mr. World and Miss Church-Member had returned to the station called Rest. They boarded the first car and were soon speeding on through Dismal Tunnel. It was a welcome moment when the car emerged from the darkness into the light of day and took its winding course upward toward the microcosm of schools, which, as seen from this side of the mountain, also presented a picture of imposing magnitude.

When the car reached the University station

Mr. World and his friend alighted, and at once entered one of the carriages in waiting. They were hurried away toward a group of immense structures known as the "College of the World's Literature;" and yet with all the immensity of its buildings, it was but a small part of the whole University which lay far extended over the distant mountain elevations.

As the noiseless carriage sped along I turned toward Blackana, who, in strange muteness still tarried at my side. "I command you, O Black Interpreter, to tell me of the origin and management of this College of Literature." As I spoke he turned his face in a manner that made me tremble. His sepulchral, husky voice only added to my uneasiness.

"It originated," he explained, "in simpler form, immediately after Satan commenced operations on the face of the earth. Parallel with the progress of every age it has increased to its present proportions. That which you see is but the central point of this great educational enterprise. Its unseen branches extend into every part of the world. The whole system is under the control of Satan. His most learned disciples have charge of the special departments."

"And what is the purpose of this limitless scheme?" I further queried.

The whole organism of Blackana quivered with reluctance as if he would not answer. "Refuse me not," I continued, "you well know that I have underneath me the everlasting arms."

He was restless for a moment, angrily rolling his awful eyes. Suddenly his attitude changed and he thus calmly answered my question: "The purpose of all these schools is to counteract and, if possible, to destroy the influence of the teachings of Him who is called Jesus Christ. He was once visible in the flesh and declared that his kingdom was everlasting. Of him it was said that he would reign till he put all things under his feet."

Then did Blackana add with fiery emphasis: "*Neither my master nor any of his allies will ever be put under his feet.* Satan's words ran wild as he addressed the insulted hosts of Hell on this issue." Knowing that Blackana had a perfect memory, I commanded that he should reproduce Satan's address in my own dialect.

Like a flash of lightning he flung himself to the winds around me, thereby transforming himself into the image of Satan. It appeared as if a thousand spirits in fitful rage were dancing in mid-air.

Then his voice pealed forth the logic of Hell as Satan had spoken it centuries before:

"Have ye heard, my noble comrades, how that Heaven flings insults into our teeth? Not satisfied that we grovel on these remains of empire, we are further threatened with being cast miserably under his feet. Whose feet I ask? The feet of our direst foe, whom to worship, as he desireth, means serfdom worse than ours. Is there one of you who will surrender his native dignity in such a fashion?"

Millions of voices rendered the air hideous with their cries, so accurately did Blackana reproduce it all.

"I knew your sentiments," continued he, triumph ringing in his tones. "What can we do but stand unitedly on our rustic frontier, and push the conquest on to farther realms. Then all Heaven will learn that we are made of grit too fine and true to lie beneath the feet of any foe."

As Blackana continued, I was struck with shuddering terror at his awful gestures; but conscious that no harm could befall me, I continued listening to his flaming oratory.

"We must arise and seize our opportunities. Go forth, under cover of night, and sow the seed of our own growing; this will flourish in the very soil that Christ would bring to highest

cultivation. The germs of our literature, rooted in human soil and growing secretly beneath the surface, shall spread throughout the world and come to fruitage in the light of every clime.

"We must build schools of literature, inspire the authors of the world with our fine creed, and thereby spread our doctrines to the myriad readers of every land and tongue. Who then, amongst our enemies, can kill the appetite when once 'tis roused to craving for the carnal? Give me the quill and the coming pen and press, and I can create thought at my bidding and turn the main streams of human endeavor into whatsoever channels I choose; and thus our river shall run full, while other streams are drying.

"With such a work how can our cause grow less or we go groveling under any foot? Impossible, my heroes! for we will live in glorious triumph to the end of time. On to your tasks, listening multitudes, and he who most successfully counteracts the so-called 'Truth' shall be a ruler in my kingdom, and shine more brightly than the radiance of all this region."

Thus was the speech suddenly ended, and I heard the unearthly reverberations of the fiendish cheering by the mighty host, while the form of Satan vanished; but from his waning shadows Blackana came forth and in death-like silence again resumed his sullen attitude at my side.

CHAPTER XI.

Schools of Literature. First and Second Divisions.

1. The schools described.
2. The literature of the world tainted by the teachers of darkness.
3. Satan's rules for the winning author.

THE College of Literature, in three grand divisions, occupied one of the most attractive sites of all the territory covered by the University of the World. It was owned and controlled by Satan, and was visited by the children of the human family from every portion of the earth.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member came thither in a conveyance. They stood before the massive structure which comprised the first division of the College. Around them were the living fountains which, like pearls in billows of green, played upon the expansive lawn. While they strolled along the pebbled paths they were lost in admiration as they continued looking upon the stupendous building which towered far into the air and extended as far as the eye could reach. In breathless silence they noted first its

size, then its durability, and marveled most at the splendid symmetry of the parts, each blending into a perfect whole.

"Heaven must have inspired so great and beautiful a design," was the first comment of Miss Church-Member. "Those porticos hanging in mid-air, those domes and pillars, dream-like, stand before me more like a hundred fabled castles than aught real to sight or touch."

"Indeed the world affords rich and delightful privileges to all who will but walk in her ways," said Mr. World just as they arrived at one of the large entrances, over which these words were written:

DEPOSITORY OF THE WORLD'S LITERATURE.
WELCOME TO ALL!

As Miss Church-Member viewed the weighty pillars on each side of the entrance, she exclaimed: "This is indeed a rare opportunity. Methinks I could revel, with delight, forever in fields of literature. Come, Mr. World, let us at once pass through the massive doors and learn what we can from so great a source."

Although the literary tastes of Mr. World were not strongly developed, yet he offered no objections to her request. He seemed willing to suffer any inconvenience for her sake so long as she traveled on the Broad Highway.

As they were entering the building I saw that many from the church and the world were also pushing their way into the interior that they might get a glimpse of the inner halls, and visit the ones that were best suited to their fancies.

Miss Church-Member was surprised when she saw the unique arrangement of the interior. There were twenty-eight magnificent halls so constructed that they converged toward a large central office into which I saw Mr. World and his companion enter, profoundly impressed with the smallness of the single human mind.

After answering the stipulated questions, they registered under the rules and regulations and were given certificates entitling them to all the privileges which this first division of the College accorded to visitors.

In the commodious office they learned that each of the twenty-eight halls contained a distinctive line of literature, systematically arranged in numerous sub-departments ; and that competent librarians superintended the literature of each hall and of each department.

Miss Church-Member ascertained also that each hall was centrally supplied with a lecture room having an immense seating capacity, and that learned professors, each in their turn, occupied the platform and constantly gave lectures which were intended to describe and illustrate

the class of literature represented in their faculties.

After considerable time spent in the office, they passed through the long and wide circular lobby, reading the beautifully emblazoned inscriptions over each entrance door, but they could not immediately decide into which hall they would first enter.

At length after a pleasant loitering, Mr. World led his charming comrade into the fourth hall, over whose entrance, in plain words, this inscription appeared:

ALL THAT WAS EVER WRITTEN CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST.

They first chose to enter a sub-department where ancient scrolls, parchments, and papyri could be seen in tiresome variety. Miss Church-Member scanned most carefully some of the manuscripts which had never been published.

In other sections of the hall there were books and pamphlets of all descriptions, each one referring to Jesus Christ in a favorable or an unfavorable manner.

During these visitations the attendants extended unusual courtesies to Mr. World and his faithful friend, and also to the endless procession of visitors and students who were constantly moving through these departments. Finally the

two companions proceeded to the lecture room of this hall and listened to an address entitled: "The Divinity of Christ," by one of Satan's ablest advocates—a professor with ecclesiastical titles. His gestures were unique and his style altogether persuasive.

I heard his words with great displeasure, for they taught the philosophy of Hell, with Heaven on the face of it.

"I must congratulate myself," commenced he, "on having the privilege of addresssing so intelligent a class of people. I only hope that I may be helpful to you in your quest of knowledge.

"The central theme of this hall is 'Jesus Christ,' and I shall now proceed to speak of his so-called 'Divinity.' I cannot question that there is a supreme hand in the works of nature, but after careful research I am compelled to doubt the genuineness of the Divinity which is ascribed to Christ. True enough, his childhood was blameless, and he possessed exceptional wisdom so that many of his countrymen believed him to be more than human. In this manner the idea of his Divinity originated, and this fallacy grew as the man grew.

"He was shrewd, and possessed a great amount of magnetic force which was trained and used with remarkable skill, all of which made

him pose as a god before a credulous and unsuspecting public. The ignorance and gross superstition of that age made a fit soil for the spread of Christ's doctrine and the idea that he was Divine.

"When Jesus discerned that his claims were more readily accepted by the poorer and more ignorant class of people, he lauded them in his teachings, while the learned and more respectable classes were subjected to his abuse and sarcasm.

"By his unusual tactics he overcame the prejudices of his enemies and, for a long time, escaped punishment. But finally he was arrested and convicted and, notwithstanding his so-called Divine power, he came to an inglorious end by death on a cross. His friends, unable to prevent his cursed death, quickly formed a plot to perpetuate his doctrines. They carried out their plot by stealthily robbing Christ's body from the grave and secretly burying it elsewhere, and then spreading the news that he, of his own power, came forth from the grave. To complete the fraud they also claimed, a little later, that he had ascended into Heaven. What was the purpose of all this? It was to prove that Christ was Divine and thereby to make his teachings authoritative and eternal.

"I wish to inform you that the manuscripts and parchments, in sub-department number six

of this hall, all point to the fact that Jesus Christ was born like any other babe and that his father was Joseph. Dishonest, indeed, is any one who would rob Joseph of this honor. 'Honor to whom honor is due.' While Christ was a great man, he never had in him the elements of Divinity. Let millions in the world glory in their imaginary theology, yet that is no reason why scholarly research should be put to naught, or why it should be sacrificed. We are living in the morning twilight of a better day when God shall be worshiped and Jesus Christ ignored; when all thought of Divinity will center at the true focus and a man will no longer receive the glory that belongs to God."

The vigorous applause which followed the remarks of this speaker fell with grating horror on my ears. "Can it be possible," thought I, "that any one can publicly teach such doctrines of Hell, and be thus applauded? Whither are so many of the church and the world drifting that they should give ear to such theology as it comes from the mouth of the Devil?"

Miss Church-Member and her escort left the lecture room and visited a few more of the sub-departments where they saw many objects of literary interest and, with the aid of experts, examined some of the old manuscripts dating back to the time of Christ.

They left the hall and were next attracted by the words over the entrance of Hall No. 9 appearing thus :

LITERATURE ON LIFE.

1. Vegetable Life.
2. Animal Life.
3. Mental Life.
4. Spiritual Life.

At the suggestion of Miss Church-Member they entered, and could readily see that the attendants and lecturers of this hall were also of a very high class. One of the speakers elaborated on the theory that life is the result of spontaneous generation.

Another, in speaking on spiritual life, made special reference to the fact that Jesus Christ claimed to be the "Life," and then proceeded to refute this claim by a series of arguments which were altogether too philosophical to be understood by the two companions.

Finding no pleasure in this metaphysical atmosphere, Mr. World conducted his companion to the adjoining hall devoted to the "Literature of Fiction."

Here they spent a season delightfully, perusing works of fiction and listening to addresses, all of which advocated the views of Satan.

I heard one of the lecturers, in a discussion on "The License of Pure Fiction" make these

dangerous remarks: "The highest fiction of the world is that in which human life is pictured in ideal colors, even though it be done at the expense of truth.

"There can be no harm if the reader should gain a false view of life. The very charm of such a view will act as a stimulus to a wider experience and to a higher culture.

"In our real life, as we come in daily contact with the world, we see and suffer enough. Therefore it cannot be harmful if fiction carries us into strange worlds of morality or into any mythical realm. I give you but the result of long and careful study, and I advise you to read the wildest and most exciting forms of fiction, and thereby get the healthful and exhilarating effect that comes from total mental absorption. All this will tend to the development of your nature so that you will, by contrast, better appreciate the substantial things of life."

I saw that Mr. World and Miss Church-Member next visited the hall devoted to the "Literature of the Passions."

After they had entered, Miss Church-Member, at first, felt embarrassed, and her sense of modesty would not have allowed her to remain had it not been that her conscience was eased by these conditions:

1. She saw that among the moving thousands that were present in the massive hall many belonged to the higher classes of society.

2. She was also informed that not a few of the throng held good membership in various branches of the visible church.

3. She readily observed that Mr. World was so much delighted that she offered no protest, and that he seemed to take an interest in the endless program as carried out in one department or another.

In this poisonous hall Miss Church-Member stultified herself more than in any other place which she had ever before visited, and thereby added one more decisive step in her downward course. She tarried longest in one of the sub-departments where Satan's expert doctors of literature delivered their special lectures on the writings of each author as far as they related directly or indirectly to the passions.

These avowed experts carried on their fiendish work under the cover of a pleasing dignity. After their crafty manner they quoted or read the fine sentences of an author, preferably those of a sensual cast, and then placed a premium on the passionate by describing the fine style of the author and showing how true to nature was the language he employed.

Thus I saw that the leaders of this department were using the choicest and the foulest productions of the pen, gathered from the authors of all lands, languages and ages, and Miss Church-Member, by degrees almost imperceptible, voluntarily sacrificed her finer moral taste on a popular and polluted altar.

To a pure heart there was an unclean cast and a withering effect prevalent throughout all the departments of this hall, and my heart burned as I continued observing how the agents of Satan plied their subtle influences so as to popularize this cosmopolitan resort. So effectually has Satan entrenched his views that some of the strong defenders of this hall of literature are connected with the church, and types of this same teaching have found their way into some of the Christian schools of the world.

After this protracted visit Mr. World and Miss Church-Member left this hall and continued their studies in hall after hall, until more than one half of the twenty-eight halls were visited. Their next objective point was the second grand division of this College devoted to "*The Elements of Success in Authorship.*"

My heart trembled at what my eyes saw. The great army of writers who studied in this department came from all countries of the

earth. "Can it be true," thought I, "that so large a portion of our authors get at least a part of their training in the schools of the Devil?"

"O Blackana!" I sighed, "how long have these things been?"

"Since the beginning of literature," was his cold and brief reply.

"Always so large a percentage of the world's authors found at that school?"

"It has never been on the decrease," he continued. "So many have visited these halls that it has been a veritable meeting-place of almost all authors of all lands and all ages at some stage in their careers. Some who came tarried long; others, not satisfied, foolishly drifted to the schools of the King's Highway which ever carry on their work in opposition to the University of the World."

Here also, in this second grand division, the subtlest kind of teaching was prevalent. In one sub-division Mr. World and Miss Church-Member read these general laws written in bold letters where all who desired could read:

RULES FOR THE WINNING AUTHOR.

1. Give quality rather than quantity.

2. If you will not compose your best, compose nothing. The world is heavily overstocked with inferior compositions.

3. Write nothing that will cause regret on your death-bed.

4. Do not follow in the rut. Go by some path untraveled before, over land or sea, and tell the world of your new discoveries.

5. To be acceptable, in the highest sense, you must teach differently than others, even though it be at the expense of what is commonly called "truth." Novelty is the winning feature.

6. In any one composition strive first to arouse the curiosity of your intended readers; then keep the curiosity suspended and finally give it satisfaction in accordance with the aim in view.

7. You may be influenced by religion, but not by religious nonsense. If your writings win, you are a teacher of millions. So, in order to reach the public ear, you may cater to the tastes and wishes of the majority.

8. If you see some vile conditions of humanity, send out, in your writings, vials of vileness. "Like cures like." If any part of the church cries, "poison, poison!" you may justify yourself by the fact that the so-called "poison" in your productions will only neutralize the poison so prevalent in society, on the same principle that poison is administered to a sickly body in order to effect a cure.

9. You are always safest when you are true to nature, even though some sentimental people may charge you with being vulgar.

10. Words of profanity are not allowable if they are the mere expression of the author, but any foul or profane expression may be quoted. An author should not be charged with the impropriety of his characters who are merely taken from actual life.

The above ten commandments, if properly interpreted and obeyed, will surely lead to literary success.

Then Mr. World escorted his confiding friend from hall to hall of this second grand division, and at many intervals they could be seen spending a quiet season on the lawns which surrounded the entire structure.

Their tastes were now more in harmony than ever, and their friendship was fast reaching that intimacy where each one was searching for pearls in the deep ocean of the other's love.

CHAPTER XII.

The Theatre.

1. Mr. World and his friend tarry at Satan's Theatres which lay in seven grades, one below the other.

2. A description of the "Century Session" held by the demons having in charge the Theatre interests of Satan.

THE College of Theatres lay between the second and third divisions of the Schools of Literature. The numerous structures were built on so large a scale, and after such winning designs, that the attention of many travelers was attracted to them and thereby to the performances given within their walls.

Here could be found some of the graduates of the Schools of Literature who were constantly engaged on one or another of the stages.

All these theatrical attractions belonged to the first grade and formed a part of a great system of Theatres which lay in seven grades, one below the other, each serving its part to engross the human mind with the carnal and sensual things of life.

The performances of the first grade were

practically free from the vulgar touches found, with increasing intensity, as one goes downward toward the seventh grade which lay beneath the Midway in the Valley of Temptation.

In these Satanic Theatres of the first grade respectability is maintained purposely so as to ensnare as many professing Christians as possible, for there are many in the ranks of the church who are building with nothing but wood, hay, and stubble. The scheme works so well that the Devil is trying to form a "Stage Trust," and get all the talent of the King's Highway to unite. Thus Satan seems to encourage morality in order to carry out his deeply laid schemes of moral pollution.

I looked into the inward workings of this terrible system. I saw multitudes descending downward from the first grade, many of whom ceased not until they had passed through all the seven grades. The scenes and revelations that came to my eyes beggar all description. My heart sickened as I beheld the millions wallowing in the mire of fleshly lusts, apparently living for no higher purpose than to see the latest novelties of expressing lewdness and sensuality.

"This is brute life, indeed," I soliloquized, "for it can be easily seen that the hearts of these people are so seared and their ears so

dull that they have no desire for the music of celestial choirs, or the ecstacies that rise from heart-communion with God."

I also saw that there were numberless underground connections between the lower Theatres and the Schools of Suicide, and with the varied haunts of Prostitution that infested the whole region.

This startling fact also forced its way to my attention:—*the money flowing from the entire seven grades fell into one treasury*, so that they who moved in the supposed moral atmosphere of the first and second grades were, nevertheless, patrons of the whole iniquitous business. At once I thought of the churches that were in sympathy, or league, with this part of the work along the Broad Highway. And I inwardly uttered these sad sentences:

"*It is no more a mystery why such churches have lost their holy influence and their warmth of spiritual life, while worldliness flourishes from the pew to the pulpit.*"

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member spent several seasons of leisure in the Theatres of the first and second grades. Finally he invited her to accompany him to a Refined Vaudeville in the third grade Theatre district. It happened to be on the same day of the week that she had formerly been accustomed to attend prayer-

The Devil's Substitute for the Prayer-Meeting.

(The Christians left their Bibles at home.)

meeting. This fact awakened memories of bygone days, and brought feelings of sadness to her heart. Mr. World, by an artful diversity of language, arrested her mind and calmed her conscience as he playfully remarked: "This will be a good substitute for the prayer-meeting."

I saw the two enter the Vaudeville with many other church-members that mingled with the jostling crowds. These Christians left their Bibles at home, while some took as a substitute their opera glasses. They can see through these better than they can through their Bibles.

While Mr. World and Miss Church-Member tarried at the Theatres, I was permitted to see a conference of the evil spirits that had in charge the Theatre interests of Satan. The conference met at the opening of the year 1901 in what was called "The Century Session."

For the time I was lost to all other surroundings, and I could hear all and see all as if I occupied the best seat. The unusual parliament seemed to be held underground, and yet one could enter directly from the surface of the earth.

The assemblage was controlled by a highly honored chief, cool and deliberate in manner. Every kind of imp imaginable could be found

in the number that constituted the many committees.

I witnessed every part of the diabolical proceedings, and will here disclose a portion of these doubly sealed secrets.

After all preliminaries were brushed away, I heard seven ominous clangs, and silence reigned supreme. The chairman rose to speak. What a mingling of light and darkness! How truly Satanic his every feature and every move! How earnest his brief address, every word in the interest of Satan's blasting work!

"Give heed, oh, ye co-workers, bound under oath to give a true report! Our cause has made advances, and our work calls for the ripest service we can give. *The theatre modernized is fast winning the church. All honor, ye spirits who played your parts so well!* The century has just closed, but not our opportunity. Let coming years be those of mightier conquest. Down with the narrow truth and morbid righteousness, and all things else that check our onward marching!"

For a moment the chairman was silent. Then, as he raised his hand, I heard a hideous clang which proved to be the signal for the report of "The-Moral-Effect-of-the-Theatre" committee. Forthwith the whole committee stood *en masse* before the chairman.

"Our work goes on with speed," cried the leader of the gang. "In every district we are gaining ground."

"I have watched your progress with joyful pride," answered the chairman, as he smiled in hellish glee. "But I noted the sharp conflicts you had with certain reformers in the churches."

"Some of them we cannot conquer," despairingly admitted the leader.

"Grieve not over forts you cannot take, but make good use of those that have surrendered."

"They are firing our guns splendidly," quickly intercepted the leader, as he rose and read the following report:

1. "We have labored earnestly in the ranks of the church until many more of her members now believe that the moral effect of our Theatres is helpful.

2. "We have succeeded in dividing the members of many churches on this question, and have witnessed, with pleasure, the many kinds of quarrels that have resulted therefrom.

3. "We have succeeded in turning the tide of many periodicals, so that the defense of the Theatre, as a moral stimulant, is more general than ever."

As the leader closed his brief report, the

chairman offered his compliments, and the host cheered with vigor.

The committee retired. The chairman again lifted his hand and two clangs were heard. This was the signal for the appearance of the "Park-Theatre" committee.

"Good tidings, or ill?" tersely asked the chairman.

"Good tidings of the first degree," cheerily replied the leader of the committee as he proceeded to read his document:

1. "We labored, with all zeal, to carry out the schemes concocted previously.

2. "We have succeeded in locating a series of free Theatres at every summer park where we could possibly induce the management to admit them.

3. "These Theatres, even though they be of a third or fourth class, are doing a great service for us by implanting a taste for other grades.

4. "By this happy medium we are winning young people and church-members by the thousand, for they can attend these Park exhibitions without being severely criticised.

5. "We are careful to give them enough immoral and sensual bait to draw them further. (Wild applause.)

6. "These innocent Park Theatres must

not be abandoned, for they are a sure training school. We hereby pledge ourselves anew to go forth more earnestly to our tasks." (Furious applause over the whole assembly.)

"Have you met with any hindrances to your work?" queried the chairman of the meeting.

"Many indeed. Some Parks refuse our class of Theatres, while others are closed to every class. But our committee is determined to push ahead."

"Onward, ye comrades," urged the chairman. "Buy up the stock of every Park, if possible, and furnish recreation for the church. Do not become too bold at first in the introduction of lewd and foolish plays, or you may be fought by the popular churches."

"Hardly possible," replied the leader. "So many in the church are glad to wink at these incongruities, for they are thereby given a chance to satisfy their carnal appetites without being classed with the regular Theatre crowd."

"This is one of our happiest modern hits," chuckled the chairman, as the committee turned away, amidst the mad-like cheering.

Next I saw that the chairman raised his hand, and at once I heard three sharp clangs which were the signal for the "Church-Choir" committee.

"What has the church-choir to do with the Theatre," thought I, as I saw the obedient host answering to their call.

"What tidings, good or ill?" asked the chairman in a tone of confidence.

"Progress slow, but sure," briefly answered the leader of the committee as he stepped a little nearer to the chairman to give his report.

"Ours is a difficult task. Some choirs are hedged about that we cannot so much as reach them with suggestions. Nevertheless, we have succeeded in many sections, notably in certain large cities. We report, with pride, that some churches have engaged genuine theatrical singers to render special selections during the regular Sunday services. Is it not an evidence of our success when the opera-stage singer of Saturday night furnishes the chief solo for church-goers on Sunday morning? This is winning certain people to the Theatre, for in many instances they cannot wait until the next Sunday; so they visit several theatres during the week to keep their spiritual strength renewed."

Then the demons cheered to the echo, and I listened with a sad, heavy heart.

The leader continued:

"We are also endeavoring to get the regular church-choirs to imitate the popular theatri-

cal stars. Of course, we do not oppose the use of religious words, if we cannot induce them to sing our selections. We are aiming to create a taste for the up-to-date novelties in music, in contrast to the old dry singing in certain churches of the King's Highway." (Prolonged applause.)

As this tall, wiry demon continued to unfold his deep-laid plans, I well understood why Satan has selected the church-choir as an objective point, and has delegated so large a number of imps to do work in that special direction. I then cried within me: "Oh, that these churches would not use their choir-corners as an advertising medium for the Theatre! And that choirs, in their musical devotions, may be led by the Spirit of God rather than by the imps of Hell!"

This committee retired with special encomiums.

The chairman rose and I heard four sonorous clangs which summoned the "Ministerial" committee. At once its members, in their sedate and portly attitudes, surged down the massive aisles.

I shuddered as I saw the variety of these mean Satanic faces, portraying a depth of vileness, mingled with shrewd and scholarly insight. With great care I studied this pack of

Hell-hounds, gathered from the ends of the earth, now standing in sullen mood, ready to give their report.

"What tidings, good or ill?" asked the chairman.

"The tidings are good," replied the famous leader. "By our efforts we have silenced many a voice which formerly thundered against us. To-day many more ministers are in sympathy with the modern Theatre of the higher grades, although not a few of these must hold their views in secret. Others speak apologetically, and still more come out in bold defense of what they term the 'Select Theatre.'"

"What do you consider the most hopeful line of your work?" further asked the chairman.

"Our work in the theological schools," quickly responded the leader. "Special sections of our committee have labored with stealthy vigor to capture the preacher before he reaches the pulpit. The last years of the century have witnessed phenomenal gains for our cause. By winning the theological student early to our Theatrical theories we are likely to gain his heart and sympathy in after years. Our success along these lines is the most hopeful sign of the times, and bespeaks the usher-

ing in of more sensible conditions. (Furious applause.)

"Before retiring," continued the leader, "let me quote the utterances of a certain broad-minded clergyman: 'The *clean* Theatre of the twentieth century will be, and ought to be, the moral prayer-meeting for Christians, while the spiritual prayer-meeting will be held in the church as usual.'"

The whole army of devils cheered like madmen. I was so aroused that I felt that ecclesiastical lynch law should be applied to any minister whose utterances caused such jubilee among the legions of Hell.

I could not remain to hear the report of:

"The Moral Play" committee,

"The Variant Dance" committee,

"The Sacred Concert" committee and other committees whose names I could not learn.

CHAPTER XIII.

Schools of Literature. Third Division.

1. Seven separate halls described.
2. The far-reaching schemes of Satan to pollute the the Press and the Pen.

MR. World and Miss Church-Member, after spending several hours at the Theatres, moved toward the vast group of buildings comprising the third division of the College of Literature. The structures lay in a semi-circle facing a magnificent court, in the center of which there was a park of surpassing loveliness. On an immense arch, over the center of the park, these words were hung in shining letters:

THIRD DIVISION:

TRUE CHRISTIANITY AND LITERATURE.

As Mr. World and his charming companion entered this great central court, they were quite overcome by the size and beauty of the three score halls, each one widening as its depth increased. Some towered one thousand feet in the air while others sent their proud domes, as it were, into the clouds.

The two companions mingled with the multitudes, engaged in the common pleasures of this open court, and watched with poetic delight the sparkling fountains, while sweet strains of music from scattered orchestras lent their charms to the soul. The shrubbery, flowers and plants, as well as the works of sculpture and pictorial art, all appeared as if angel fingers had been employed in their production and arrangement.

The season here spent by Miss Church-Member was the happiest that she had yet experienced since she had left the King's Highway. To think that she was now living in the threshold of True Christianity, in its relation to literature, was at once novel and refreshing to her mind, for she now claimed to be a more faithful Christian than ever.

During their protracted stay at this division they visited the following halls, each one devoted to a specific purpose:

Hall No. 3. "The Bible from a Literary Standpoint."

Hall No. 8. "The Best Literature for a Sunday School Class."

Hall No. 9. "The Best Literature for Sunday School Libraries."

Hall No. 13. "The Best Literature for a True Christian to Read."

Hall No. 16. "Literature for a Christian's 'Grip' when on a Vacation."

Hall No. 27. "The Sunday Newspaper and Other Publications."

Hall No. 38. "The Best Way of Conducting a Religious Newspaper."

Mr. World spent a day with his appreciative friend under the teaching of Hall No. 3. The professors were exceptionally brilliant, and so won the confidence of their many hearers that what they said seemed to have more weight than even the Bible. They tried to demonstrate that the literary style of the Bible was far below par.

When they entered Hall No. 8 they were surprised to see how large a number of Sunday school workers and teachers were already there. The meeting that day was held largely in the form of an open parliament, and a discussion was in progress concerning the use of the Bible in the class during the study of the lesson.

"Would it not be preferable," asked an interested visitor, "to use the Bible in the class during the study of the lesson, and use the special helps only for preparation?"

"Don't think of it, don't think of it!" abruptly answered the teacher. "It only would be a step backward."

"It appears to me," continued the visitor, "that our young people ought to become more familiar in using and handling the Bible, and if it were used in connection with the study of the lesson it would surely prove to be a valuable help, even beyond what the present system affords."

"And would you throw aside all the very valuable side lights to the lesson that are being produced in such rich variety and abundance?" hurriedly asked a Sunday school teacher who was present on a furlough.

"Nay, nay," earnestly spoke the visitor, "let the press go on, but let not its fruit be substituted for the bread of life. Fruit is good, delicious and healthful, but we need the staff of life. *Let the real actual Bible be handled and used in the teaching of the lesson. Then whatever else is wise to use as an auxiliary help may be brought into service.* That is my platform, pure and simple."

The leader of the meeting was agitated. He impatiently rose to his feet before the last words had fallen from the visitor's lips.

"Let us use reason," he said, with a light vein of sarcasm in his voice. "Is it not true that the average child sees enough of the Bible in his home and in the public schools, and that

he greatly relishes a change when he comes to the Sunday school?"

"That's only too true," spoke up the worldly element who were there in large numbers.

"Let me assure you," continued the speaker as he was warming to his theme under false fires of devilish sophistry, "in the day when the Bible was used in the Sunday school classes, spiritual ignorance abounded more than now."

"Why not be satisfied with rapid advancement, instead of inviting retrogression in knowledge, and a double decimation in Sunday school attendance, by compelling scholars to go searching through a book as uninteresting and unfathomable to them as the Bible?"

"One great hindrance to Sunday school work is its pious and sanctimonious tendency. If the schools of the twentieth century are to be successful, we must have less of that Bible stiffness in them, and still more of an open sociability."

The worldly element and some of the Sunday school teachers were now cheering heartily. But the speaker continued;

"Instead of going to an extreme that means death to the Sunday school by advocating that an army of cold Bibles should go walking into the service, I should rather advocate a change in the other direction, for I am even opposed to the tons of cheap literature filled with cloudy

opinions that are now being scattered throughout our schools. We need lesson helps that are interspersed with incidents of adventure, and startling stories that have fire and life in them. Let some publisher take the hint.

"Then the boy or girl whose daily reading may consist of that style of writing will find the Sunday school more congenial to his nature, and he will go there with a bound. In that manner you are certain to win the boy's heart, after which you can, with tact, send the spiritual truth deeper into his soul. From such a scholar keep the Bible as far away as possible. It is not even necessary to lay stress on the fact that the lesson text is taken from the Bible.

"If the teacher can succeed in holding his respect for the Sunday school, then, in after years, when he is more matured and is better able to reason, you may bring the Bible itself more directly to his attention, and you will secure better results than are prevalent to-day in the Sunday school world."

The audience cheered lustily. In this cheering Mr. World and his companion joined. The visitor, who was deeply grieved at the warm reception of such fiendish doctrines, arose to speak, but the intolerant cried out: "Away with him! We want no more bigotry and one-hundred-years-behind-the-time speech-

es!" At the the suggestion of the chairman he was hurried from the room to appear before a commission on lunacy.

The speech had its desired effect. The great majority of the audience were convinced that the Bible was not a "drawing card," and that it should not be introduced into the class study if it could possibly be avoided. A few pledged that they would do all in their power to effect a revolution in the present system of lesson helps.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member left this hall and entered Hall No. 9. It was a rare privilege for them to walk through the largest Sunday school library in the world, where many committees were at work selecting books for their respective Sunday schools.

Satan had so ingeniously managed the composition of these books, and so artfully arranged them on the endless shelves, that one could scarcely discern the good parts of a book from the bad, or determine in which section of the hall the largest percentage of good books could be found. In this way committees almost invariably picked up considerable chaff with the wheat.

I looked at Blackana and sighed: "Oh! Blackana, how long will these things be? If

only a conflagration would reduce the contents of that hall to ashes!"

"Ah! mortal," he coldly replied, "these things will never be destroyed, for the building is fire proof. Surely the Sunday school should get as much of its library as possible from a source so well protected."

"For what fiendish reason?" I asked as I was moved with indignation.

"Nothing fiendish about it. Satan can furnish books at less cost, and thereby be of material financial help to the Sunday school. Furthermore, he is able to furnish a larger variety and a more inviting class of books, with more spicy fiction, and less of that deadness so generally characteristic of the books coming from the hand of a narrow-minded Christian."

"Silence, thou agent of the Devil! Thou art again dealing in falsehood. When thou speakest to me, speak truthfully or hold thy tongue in quietness."

He rolled his eyes at me, but spoke no more.

In the early hours of the following day I saw the same two companions enter Hall No. 13 devoted to "*The Best Literature for a True Christian to Read.*" They moved leisurely from table to table scanning and reading the books and

booklets which, in great variety, lay before them.

Weariness urged them to a seat in the lecture department where they were entertained by a scholarly address on "*Choice Literature for a Christian.*"

"It must not be forgotten." said the speaker in one part of his address, "that the mind can be ruined by lack of vigorous exercise. In the physical body the stomach would become weak and sickly were it not compelled, quite frequently, to digest strong foods or a great variety of them. So also the mind, in order to reach its true development, needs a wide variety of thought-food. Not alone that of a sickly-sentimental or sanctimonious kind which in its place is all right, but such a variety as will best stimulate the mind in a well-rounded, liberal education. In particular, a good Christian should peruse such literature as will inform him thoroughly concerning the enemies of Christianity. He should not spurn, but rather study infidelity, skepticism and every other hostile movement, so that he may be able the better to appreciate his own position. The Bible is not so much a book for reading, as a book of reference, and therefore a Christian's loyalty to Christ must not be measured by his reading and studying the

Bible, but by his success in locating the enemies of the cross and studying their designs, looking over their encampments, and estimating the strength of their weapons. If he becomes thus acquainted with the foe, he is in better position to order an advance, or to effect a treaty whereby much strife may be avoided."

Hall No. 16 was next visited. It offered to its patrons a happy time. Here the work of the artist was in pleasing evidence. On beautiful walls were pictured retreats of all kinds. The games and sports, in endless variety, which make merry the park, field and glen, were the subjects of some of the paintings.

These were the titles of some of the larger wall paintings:

"A restful day under the oak."

"The campers at the midday meal."

"An hour of idle reading."

"Around the camp-fire at night."

"At rest beside the bounding brook."

"Along the beach at bathing time."

"The cottage by the sea."

Nothing was said about the paintings on the wall; they were merely suggestive of the refreshment that came after toil.

The lecturer of this hall was a jolly man, an athlete of fine proportions, whose splendid

appearance attracted the attention of the throng of listeners.

"We are not here to discuss the good or evil which comes from various kinds of recreation, but to tell you, from experience, what kind of reading to take with you when you go on a vacation, or a pleasure trip. As you are seeking rest for the body so let your religious books have a rest. Leave them all at home, except the Bible, and prayerbook,—you might take them along to be used in case of sickness or accident. Then put in your 'grip' some humorous books, such as will make you merry. Besides these place therein some other very light reading, such as will rest the mind from the more serious things of life.

"As a father delighteth to see his children roam and romp in glee over the meadows after the time of faithful toil, so the Heavenly Father delighteth to see *his* true children lay aside the seriousness of prayer and Bible study, and go forth in joyful rest to the seashore, or to the quiet glen in the fastnesses of the woods. If you follow these directions, you will get the cream of pleasure and profit, and return to your secular or religious work with renewed vigor."

I saw many ministers of the gospel in the audience, but not all seconded the words of the speaker.

Mr. World and his confiding companion were surprised after entering Hall No. 27 to find on exhibition a copy of all the periodical publications of the world. This was a large hall and had sub-divisions, each devoted to a distinct class of literature. One department contained all non-sectarian religious publications; another the sectarian; still a third was devoted to daily newspapers, partisan and non-partisan; yet another contained all trade journals; another all the scientific periodicals, and thus the plan was continued throughout.

This was the busiest place of all, for some of the periodicals had their offices in this hall, while others had representatives there, so that countless thousands thronged the sub-departments daily. Each sub-department had its own corps of lecturers.

Many editors, before entering into active service, take the entire series of courses offered by this hall, and are thus taught to prevaricate, abbreviate, and exaggerate, or do ought else to attain the end in view.

I saw Mr. World and Miss Church-Member pass by one sub-department after another. They were not pleased with the excitement that prevailed. They had intended however to pause at the department devoted especially to the Sunday newspaper question, and tarried at

the door long enough merely to catch these few words from one of the speakers:

"I am a member of the church myself, and bear an honorable name therein; but I am unwilling to be classed with a set of bigots who would rob us of our personal liberties and, if possible, place all kinds of restrictive measures about our inalienable rights. I stand for liberty first of all, and tyranny never. Why should one dictate to me what I shall read on Sunday? I look at my Bible more than one hundred times a year, and read a Sunday newspaper only fifty-two times. It was a happy change that started the regular press of the country to yield seven issues a week, and thereby send forth additional rays of enlightenment to a people who are in sad need of all that they can get to increase their intelligence.

"According to my opinion there are so many practices that are worse than reading a Sunday newspaper that Satan must surely be annoyed to see a man engaged in such a harmless pursuit. Happy, indeed, would we all be if the———"

The two companions passed on and heard no more, until they left this hall and paid a brief visit to Hall No. 38 devoted to "*The Best Way of Conducting a Religious Newspaper.*"

There were very few editors present, but

the debate amongst them was vigorous and, at times, very contentious, much to the interest and enjoyment of the spectators.

The question being discussed was: "*How Can We Best Increase the Circulation of the Church Paper?*"

After a few exchanges of opinions, the chairman of the meeting advocated, with grave dignity, that all religious newspapers should be more conformed to the tastes and the level of a hungry world. "There is too great a contrast," said he, "between the mental condition of the laymen and the high, cold tone of the average religious paper. Let the editor of a church paper do as did his Master Jesus Christ, —come down to the level of the world, where he can reach the heart and the ear of the common people of whom the masses are composed. No paper should be so holy that it cannot adapt itself to the development of the natural as well as the spiritual part of man."

These remarks were warmly applauded.

Next an editor of a religious paper arose, and spoke with decision:

"I want to be as liberal and broad-minded as God would have me be. I came to this hall with doubtful steps. I cannot say that I have profited thereby. My mind is at variance with the chairman of this meeting. He says: 'All

religious papers should be more conformed to the tastes of the hungry world.' Let me ask, with all honesty, what is the taste of the hungry world? Is it not a terribly perverted taste, a hungering for the black sins of death? I contend that it is the work of a good paper to be a beacon light, even though it shines from a lofty light-house. It may thereby shine out farther and wider. Away with the doctrine of devils that would pervert the truth and send with merciless fling———"

At this juncture the speaker was seized by an officer who came running in at the ringing of a bell and arrested the editor on the charge of "disturbing the peace," which, the chairman declared, was due to a diseased state of his mind.

Miss Church-Member was freightened from the hall by this episode, and was followed by her less fearful companion.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Devil's Temperance College.

1. Mr. World and his companion visit this immense college, with many wings, all devoted to teaching every phase of the temperance question in accordance with Satan's views.

2. A view of the millions who attend this college.

AUTOMOBILES are used by the agents of Satan to convey students and visitors from one college to another of the great University of the World.

I saw Miss Church-Member and her cherished escort leave the College of Literature in one of these up-to-date carriages.

"Shall we tarry at the athletic field?" asked Mr. World as they came to a famous sporting ground.

"Let us rather hasten to the Temperance College," she suggested. But her manner indicated that she did not wish to urge him away from the place of his heart's desire.

"Altogether at your pleasure," he smiled, as he sank back into the comfortable cushions of the conveyance.

They soon reached the desired locality, saw the moving millions from all portions of the

earth, and heard the ceaseless babble of their voices harmonizing with the work of this college which was known among the pilgrims of the King's Highway as *The Devil's Temperance College.* It covered many acres of ground, and consisted of many immense buildings, around which clustered many smaller structures serving for auxiliary purposes.

When Mr. World and Miss Church-Member walked about the college grounds, and saw more closely the magnitude and beauty of the edifices, they were so overawed that their tongues offered no comment.

They mingled a while with the merry multitude, and then at one corner of the group entered the gigantic building devoted to the subject of Temperance and the Bible. They hoped thereby to get the consensus of opinion on one of the complex questions of the day.

At the bureau of information the two companions were directed to the Public Hall of Debate which was reached by the aid of one of the numerous electric elevators. The Great Hall had an auditorium of one hundred feet in height and a seating capacity fully capable of accommodating the visiting multitudes. The acoustics were so perfect that one, at the farther end of the room, could easily hear the speaker on the stage.

When Mr. World and his friend had entered the hall they were surprised to learn that many of the auditors were members of the more radical churches along the King's Highway.

The corps of high titled professors who occupied the stage spoke at intervals, or answered questions which were propounded by persons in the audience.

Over the stage I saw in illuminated letters:

TEMPERANCE AND THE BIBLE.

An aged man was speaking when the two comrades took seats near the center of the room.

"We are not here," explained the venerable man, "to prove that the Bible is either false or true. We leave that question for other schools to decide. It is our province to show what the Bible teaches on this important theme. Temperance is a word so misused and so abused that it becomes people of sound judgment to go to the rock bottom of the question as viewed in the light of Scripture."

Then, adjusting his green spectacles, the speaker opened the Bible and offered to explain, or to have explained, any part of it that bore on the subject of "Temperance from a Bible Standpoint."

A breathless silence followed until a moderate-drinking church-member arose with Bible in

hand. "Did Christians, during the life of Christ, drink wine?" he asked, in a self-righteous manner.

The speaker called upon Mr. Wine Expert who quickly stepped forward from his chair on the stage.

"There can be no doubt," he affirmed, "but that they drank wine freely. They knew enough in that day not to discard a good thing."

Hundreds of people sprang to their feet, but Mr. Venerable ordered that one should speak at a time and that they all should be seated and first listen to the questioner.

"Was that wine the same, in kind, that Noah drank, as related in Gen. 9: 21?"

"Identical."

"And the same that is used to-day in the commercial world?"

"It is the same as the good wine that is used to-day. There are many modern adulterations."

The questioner took his seat. A man from London then obtained the floor. He also held a Bible as he spoke.

"I am a temperance worker in one of the districts of London, and would like to know whether you conclude by your former assertion concerning the early Christians that the Bible does not speak against wine drinking?"

"Not in a single place. How could it do so consistently?" answered the Devil's expert.

"Will you please turn to Prov. 20:1. 'Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' How do you harmonize this passage with what you have just asserted?" The man from London sat down.

"Quite an easy task for one who has given honest study to the question," said Mr. Wine Expert. "Wine is a mocker. Just as wisdom mocks at the calamity of those who reject it in Prov. 1:26. So, wine, personified in a similar manner, mocks at the folly of those who refuse it. (Applause.) Strong drink is raging. Just as in Jonah 1:15, the sea was raging in protest against Jonah because he refused to preach the truth to the people. So in this passage, 'strong drink is raging,' because so many church-members and ministers refuse to preach the real truth to the people on the subject of strong drink. (Prolonged applause.) If there were as much said against me falsely, as has been spoken against strong drink, I would not only rage, but would go raging and foaming over this stage in protest. (Tremendous applause and shouting from the people of the world.) I tell you more, my friends, strong drink will keep on raging as long as old Voices and 'The

New Voice' of cranks and idiots are heard to squeak out their childish nonsense to an enlightened people." (Furious applause and demonstrations.)

"The last part of the passage is easily to be understood," continued the speaker. "'Whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.' How could a person be wise who allows himself to be deceived and hoodwinked concerning as good a thing as wine or strong drink?"

"Nobody, we need not fear," cried out a brewer from one side of the room.

"There is however a host," continued Mr. Wine Expert, "who are woefully deceived, and who are endeavoring to force their deceptions upon the state."

"And I am one of them," shouted a tall man from Kansas, U. S. A., as he violently jumped to his feet, and remained standing.

"I would suggest," calmly interrupted the venerable leader, "that our special photographer take a snap shot of this man. We are always glad to keep a record of such monstrosities. He looks like a fair specimen of a deceived man. (Laughter.) He is lean and bony, and if any one of you never before saw such a man, take a full view of him now. Suppose you," he said, as he continued pointing at the Kansas man, "slowly make a full revolution on your

feet so that each one can here see all sides of you,—if you have more than one side." (Great applause amongst the people of the world.)

The man from Kansas stood still till the voice of the insulting outcry died away.

"I can stand abuse; I can stand irony and sarcasm; but I thank God that where I live I need no longer endure the insults of the Rum Devil. (Suppressed applause.) If Mr. Venerable thinks I am the only man present who comes under his classification of 'deceived persons,' I will demonstrate to him his folly, for there are many thousands here who have not yet bowed the knee to Baal."

"Out of order!" "Put him out!" "Away with him!" came from the audience.

"If there is a person here opposed to the Rum Traffic, let him rise," fearlessly continued the tall man.

Up sprang a W. C. T. U. leader; then another person; then a hundred from Maine; yea, a thousand more until over seven thousand, from all parts of the world, stood on their feet.

"Remain standing, I ask you! Let not one of you act the coward! There are others here today, who came in, as I did, to visit. Stand up! Show your colors! If you remain seated you will be classed with the enemy. The time

to honor your cause is at hand. I ask you seventy thousand church-members present to choose this day whom you will serve."

Mr. Venerable, who was an experienced man in these uprisings, whispered to an excited saloon-keeper: "Let them proceed. A house divided against itself can not stand."

"I demand order," shouted a high-license advocate who owned a brewery, but the agitated fellow was soon calmed by these personal words from the venerable chairman: "*Let these people go. They will soon get into factional contention and thereby break the point of their steel more effectually than we could do it.*"

"Remain standing, ye noble band of men and women!" shouted the Kansas man with increasing earnestness. "You, who are too cowardly or indifferent to rise from your seats, are throwing your influence this day on the side of the enemy, thereby casting a reflection on the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, and——"

This was more than a certain minister could bear. So, before the Kansas man had finished his last sentence, he sprang excitedly to his feet and shook his fist defiantly: "I want it distinctly understood that I am just as good as the man from Kansas, and just as much of a temperance man, but I don't believe in this way of showing my colors. I would not be

standing now had I not been insulted more by that crank of one idea, standing there, than by Mr. Wine Expert who so contemptibly perverted Scripture."

Mr. Wine Expert sprang to the edge of the stage to defend his position, but Mr. Venerable was instantly at his side. "*Come, come, don't spoil that fight; suffer rather than have them combine against you,*" were the quiet words of logic that brought him to his seat without uttering a word.

Then up jumped a few prominent church-members to express their indignation at the adverse criticism of the Kansas man.

"Those are exactly my sentiments, and I here offer my protest against this manner of procedure," said one as he looked approvingly at the minister.

"And so do I." "I am most emphatically of the same opinion." "I stand here, a true temperance man, to express my indignation at that Kansas prodigy," were some of the expressions which came from temperance men who were not willing to be classed with the seven thousand.

Then upwards of one hundred women rose to their feet and indignantly rebuked the Kansas man for his misjudgment in starting this factional display.

This provoked some radical leaders of the W. C. T. U. who chanced to be there as detectives or visitors. They also arose in defense of the Kansas man.

I saw the tumult rising. Disorder was pre-dominant. Hundreds tried to speak at once. Saloon-keepers, brewers, whiskey politicians, and the professors on the stage were smiling in ghoulish glee. They enjoyed it more than a prize fight, and the results were at once more disastrous and more deplorable.

As the conflict waxed hotter some men and women were screaming, and some fainting, and some resorted to blows. Others scrambled to get from the room. The elevators were put in quick service, and I saw Mr. World and Miss Church-Member, with thousands of others, running from the scene of the fight.

"Let us go to another building," suggested Miss Church-Member.

A very short time after this I saw them enter the largest building of all the Temperance College. It stood centrally amongst the great group, and was devoted to "*Hygiene and Temperance.*"

After learning that they came as visitors, a director advised them to pass the many medical wings on separate flats and go to the great auditorium on one of the higher floors.

A Scene in the Devil's Temperance College.

The fight between the temperance factions was greatly enjoyed by the saloon-keepers, brewers, and whisky politicians.

Proceeding, in obedience to the advice given, they soon beheld a room of greater size and magnificence than the one which they had just left, and as they were taking seats they fixed their attention on the lecturer who had already been speaking for an hour. He was discoursing on the relation of strong drink to the stomach.

"It must be remembered," affirmed he, "that the stomach was made to serve man. The appetite is the true criterion by which he may know what his body needs. If he feels a thirst for alcoholic drink, it is akin to a hunger for any special class of foods. He is not to ask his servant, the stomach, whether it is willing to do the work of transformation. He is to give it the work to do. The stomach will do it, unless that particular digestive function is lost. It is claimed by some who know more about ditch-digging than about physiology, that alcoholic beverages ruin the lining of the stomach, creating ulcers, and other disorders. This kind of teaching reminds me of a conundrum. 'Why is a scientific temperance man like a dead man in his coffin?' Who can answer it?"

"Because each one ought to be buried," guessed a liquor-merchant from Paris. (Laughter.)

"A good guess," said the speaker, but you have not yet hit the mark."

"Because needer von dem is vert anyding," said the proprietor of a beer-saloon from Germany. (Increased laughter.)

"You are still away from my idea," spoke the lecturer.

"I know it," said a rum-lawyer. "It is because they both lie." (Applause.)

"That's exactly the truth of the matter. These so-called 'scientific temperance men' are accountable for more lies imposed on a credulous public than can be corrected for many years to come. Any sensible man knows that moderate drinking is healthful to the stomach. If a man drinks too much, he is liable to trouble, just like a man who eats too much, or sleeps too much, or even talks too much about temperance. (Applause and laughter.) I tell you, my good friends, a little of that elixir of life is just as good for my stomach as it was for Timothy's, and the good man Paul would say the same thing if he were here to-day. (Cries from the world of "that's so!" and "hurrah for Paul!") I am satisfied to have a great man like Paul on my side, even if I must know that some of his pigmy disciples are against me.' (Increased applause.)

This speech was especially enjoyed by Mr. World who himself was addicted to a moderate use of alcoholic beverages.

An announcement came from the platform that in an hour the eminent Dr. Strauss of Europe would discourse on "The Effect of Malt Liquors on the Heart," and those who wished to remain might spend the interim in social intercourse.

In consequence of this announcement the major part of the audience dispersed in varying groups, and discussed the merits of the lecture just ended.

Every creed was there represented by a few or more of its members, many of whom were favorably and deeply impressed by the argument of the Devil as it was given in the address.

Others I saw, not a few, who laid bare this iniquitous scheme of presenting the untruth, and declared that they would no more give ear to any teaching that came from that source.

This gave rise to endless quibblings and contentions between church-members of the same faith and those of separate creeds. These disputes continued with increasing bitterness until the hour had passed.

All eyes were fixed upon the stage as the portly Dr. Strauss arose to speak. His voice at first was slow and deep, and in all he was the personification of dignity.

The first part of his lecture was a very convincing argument in favor of what is called the "*Normal Use of Malt Liquors.*" He declared that moderate drinking could have no evil effect on the action of the heart, except in rare cases. To prove his general statement and to win the confidence of his hearers, he quoted over forty printed and written extracts from eminent physicians of the world.

After this general survey of his argument, he entered into details and illustrated the second division of his lecture by the use of pictorial charts. In this manner the construction and action of the heart were concretely shown.

In the third division of the lecture the Prince of Darkness showed his skill in manipulating the utterances of the speaker. By a second series of illustrated charts the lecturer intended to show how alcoholic beverages, in coursing through the human system, benefited the heart rather than injured it. In trying to establish this point he used the subtlest sophistry of Satan.

Through the three divisions of the discourse I heard vigorous applause, and when, in the smooth language of his final climax, he uttered the last word and was returning to his seat, there was a deafening roar from all parts of the vast hall.

To the mind of Miss Church-Member the argument of Dr. Strauss was unanswerable, and consequently she was obliged to revise her radical opinions on the temperance question; and not only she, but a host of others from the ranks of the Christian church were influenced similarly.

After leaving this hall the happy pair spent a long time in passing through some of the other buildings of the group. *Miss Church-Member was so filled with the doctrines of the Devil that she thought of going as a missionary to the pilgrims of the Narrow Way.*

During their visit at the Temperance College Mr. World conducted his ever-faithful friend through some of the fashionable temperance-saloons connected with the institution.

Miss Church-Member would not have entered and much less indulged in the questionable beverages, had she not been so strongly influenced by the prolonged visit at the section of the group devoted to the study of "*Temperate and Intemperate Drinks.*"

I was sorely vexed at the operations of this whole college and, looking at Blackana, I said impatiently:

"How can your comrades find delight in such an impish work—covering truth and scattering hellish sophistry abroad?"

"Delight?" repeated Blackana. "This world is but the Devil's Heaven, and those in his kingdom find chiefest delight in thorns, and not in flowers; in spinning sophistry, and not in dead things like truth and logic."

CHAPTER XV.

Infernal School System.

1. A general view of the vast University of the World with all its subordinate operations. All working in harmony to destroy the good that God would do in the world.

THE University of the World is so extensive that one could not visit all its parts during the course of a life-time, but there is a place called the Magic Observatory whence an observer can have a bird's-eye view of all the principal scholastic operations of the Broad Highway.

The Observatory is owned and controlled by careful agents of Satan who will allow only certain persons to get the benefit of so extensive a view.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member left the ground of the Temperance College and proceeded to get permission to rise to the glorious heights of the Observatory. Mr. World secured permission, but his companion, not having had sufficient experience in the service of Satan, was refused a pass.

The difficulty was settled by a happy thought. Miss Church-Member suggested that while he should improve the opportunity and rise to see the sights, she would visit the College of Fashions, for which privilege she had been yearning.

I saw that Mr. World spent a long time in viewing the endless proportions of the noted Observatory, and finally stood on the lofty viewpoint with an interpreter at his side.

He was then directed to a seat on a mechanical device that moved in a circle; and as he sat there he looked through the powerful glasses of the immense telescope.

He first beheld the Schools of the Fine Arts, with their myriad students who swarmed through a group of buildings so large that it covered the first sweep of the telescope.

At the next turn of the magic device Mr. World saw the Special Schools of Mathematics whose prevalent tendency was to destroy faith. Here the mind of each student was taught to submit everything to the tests of proof, so that by the time one's training was finished he would believe only what could be scientifically demonstrated. In this way Satan induced many a student to disregard the Bible because he could not reduce all its teachings to the cold and rigid rules of human reasoning.

Thus does Satan manipulate affairs so that many of the Christian schools of the earth have imbibed a similar course:—first exalting Reason, and doing nothing to correspondingly develop in the student the functions of Faith.

When the telescope again turned Mr. World saw the Schools of Metaphysics where Satan operated in harmony with the limitless scheme of the whole University.

Next the College of Theology came within the range of vision. Here the clergymen of the Broad Highway are prepared to teach the doctrines of Hell under the guise of "Broad-Minded Theology." I envied not Mr. World's position, for I could also see what his wondering eyes beheld. As I took a transient view of this vast group of Theological Halls, and saw how many human beings resorted hither for information, I could the better understand why the world is kept so full of perverted truth. There is a daily inflow of ecclesiastics into this College, even such as become dissatisfied with the Theology as taught on the Highway of the King.

At the next turn of the telescope Mr. World saw the extensive Business College whither so large a number of merchants go to learn how to advertise, and also how to get rich quickly. One hall alone is set apart for

the purpose of teaching a merchant how to practice fraud without injuring his good standing in the church; another hall teaches how far a business man may venture into prevarication without lying; while a still larger hall is devoted to the wholesale trade, and is intended to teach the best methods of adulterating foods while yet allowing them to be sold for genuine goods.

Mr. World was deeply interested in the view afforded by the next turn of the telescope, for the magnificent groups of buildings comprising the College of Fashions now lay before his admiring vision. He knew that his beloved friend was somewhere amongst the moving throngs that ever kept the College astir.

I looked in wonderment upon the far-reaching operations of this Satanic center. The teachings of this College were so far-reaching that the seeds of endless follies were planted in the generations yet unborn.

In one of the larger halls of this imposing group I saw an endless and popular variety of the gods of Fashion. They were worshiped by the slavish legions who were willing to sacrifice their all rather than forsake their chosen idols.

Mr. World plainly saw the connection between this College of Fashions and the Devil's Pawn Shop.

The next item in the weird program was the Devil's Optical College which Mr. World and Miss Church-Member had visited in the earlier days of their companionship. Satan's Medical Schools also lay in the same line of vision, and were intimately connected with the Devil's Hospital which had numberless branches in all parts of the world.

And next the vast College of Literature flashed before the admiring eyes of Mr. World. As seen through the telescope this section presented a most beautiful picture.

The surface Schools of Law next attracted the attention of the spectator who was surprised to get so large a view of these operations.

Mr. World still moved in the magic circle, and saw the whole program as revealed at the angle at which the telescope was inclined. When the first circle was completed, the telescope dropped to a new angle and started on its second revolution, disclosing to the observer a new world of schools, all of which were also comprehended in the University of the World.

The Missionary College proved to be an interesting sight, as did also the Devil's Temperance College.

One of the most surprising sights that greeted Mr. World in this second revolution

was Satan's Modern College of Narcotics which is a series of schools built and operated with great care, intended to counteract the special efforts ever being put forth by the devotees of the King's Highway to teach the relations of narcotics to the nervous system. Formerly Satan did this branch of work in one of the wings of the Temperance College, but on account of the great stress put on this subject by the Surpassing Schools of the Christ, Satan has built this modern institution, and now the church is in confusion because *so many of its members have such an indistinct vision that they cannot discern between the wool of the sheep and the hair of the wolf, even when each animal is wearing its own hide.*

The most mysterious schools revealed by this second revolution were called the Schools of Emergency. These required the skill of the interpreters to give Mr. World an idea of their work.

This is also a modern idea of the Evil One, and since their erection the schools have been patronized by an astonishingly large number of disappointed church-members who receive instruction more readily from the modern methods here in vogue than from the old-time system.

Then did Mr. World behold a new line of

schools in course of erection, but the interpreter refused to give him satisfaction when he asked the purpose of these new schools.

When the great telescope had finished the second revolution, Mr. World was surprised to see that it commenced on the third round as the outer end of the telescope pointed more directly toward the base of the Observatory.

Startling scenes were now laid bare. The underground schools of this Great University seemed to be greater than the surface operations.

Mr. World first saw the Opium Schools, built in the form of large dens. After this came the Schools of Iniquity, operated in darkness. Here all forms of evil are taught and made to appear justifiable under certain conditions. Many of these underground schools could not be clearly seen by Mr. World, but ere the telescope completed its third revolution he saw the Schools of Suicide more distinctly than during his visit, and got a glimpse of the limitless Law Departments Underground, and the terrible pictures of sadness and sin as seen beneath the Devil's Hospital.

Mr. World raised his eyes from the telescope and looked towards the interpreter. "What lies beyond those vast elevations?" he

asked as he pointed to a rugged mountain range farther down the Broad Highway.

"Back of those mountains lies the beautiful Wizard City, shut in from all the world. Ask nothing more about it."

"But may I not enter it?"

"Not unless you are fortunate enough to discover one of the paths that lead to the Summit. From thence one can see the City."

CHAPTER XVI.

Expert Inventors of the Broad Highway.

1. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member fail to see the Ways and Means Committee at work.

2. They are directed to the city where expert inventors are constantly employed in devising weapons and all kinds of devices.

3. They see a few inventions which are just being perfected to facilitate the services of the churches along the King's Highway.

AFTER Mr. World's remarkable experiences on the Observatory, he gladly called for his friend, Miss Church-Member, who accompanied him on another branch of the Mountain Trolley.

They alighted at a station called Progress, and proceeded on the Broad Highway. Neither of them became wearied in listening to the experiences of the other during their brief separation.

Ere long they came to a large hall which was used by the Ways and Means Committee of the Broad Highway.

They obtained permission to visit the interior of the hall, hoping thereby to see the famous committee in session.

But, after being escorted from room to room by a guide, they were informed, upon reaching the main auditorium, that the committee was holding a secret session, and that no visitors would be allowed to enter during that day.

"How soon will visitors be admitted¿" asked Mr. World, with a shade of disappointment in his tone.

"Not until the matter now under consideration is settled. It may be two hours, perhaps two days," was the indefinite reply.

"And where can we spend the interim with most profit and interest?" further interrogated Mr. World.

The guide, looking through a window, described a path leading to a lofty summit. "When you reach that elevation," explained he, "you will see, in the busy vale beyond, the Wizard City.

"Most of the experiments performed in that wondrous vale are closed forever from the view of mortal man; but so much of the work as you are allowed to see will interest you for many days."

"In my opinion such a privilege is greater than the one we are here denied," smilingly spoke Miss Church-Member.

"True indeed, my friend, unless the climb-

ing of the hill should prove to be a more arduous task than you imagine," cautioned Mr. World.

"Each of you will be pleasantly surprised," promptly affirmed the guide, "for they only can climb to that summit who do so willingly, and by them it is easily accomplished."

"Is there no shorter way thither than by that winding path?" slowly asked Mr. World.

"There is but one shorter route, and that is underground. No one is permitted to go that way until he has passed the summit and has reached the seventh degree in the secret service of our Master."

"Ah! so there is an underground connection between this place and the Expert Inventors?" said Miss Church-Member in a low tone, and with a look of suspicion.

"Be not in the least alarmed. The Ways and Means Committee and the Expert Inventors work in harmony, each supplementing the work of the other. It is therefore essential that between them there be as close connection as possible, not only for convenience of travel, but for insuring secrecy."

"Then why are the two places so far apart?" queried Miss Church-Member.

"Everything is perfectly arranged. If you

could see the underground world between the two sites you would readily observe the logical relation of all parts. But the bell rings; I must go," continued the guide. "If you wish further information you may obtain it at the office," and with a courteous bow he withdrew.

That same day I saw the two travelers climb with ease to the summit from whence they beheld the most curious sight that had yet met their gaze since their fellowship had begun.

Down in the long and deep sloping vale before them, shut in from all the world, lay a large city of fantastic structures.

The weird outlines of this marvelous city extended downward into the darkness of the earth, while the height of its buildings varied from the common even unto the amazing.

The form of the city, and the shape of its buildings, were the most bizarre features of all. Only a few of the edifices bore resemblance to any which the travelers had ever before seen.

Toward one end of the city they saw a cluster of buildings which, taken as a whole, resembled a gigantic tree towering to a great height and covered with strange foliage.

At the other end of the city the structures were divided into more than a hundred groups,

The Wizard City.

Here Satan's expert inventors devise novelties for the use of churches, such as the "Angelette" for choir singing, the "Service Regulator," etc.

resembling somewhat variously-shaped balloons of monstrous size.

The sides of the city were constructed somewhat after the manner of immense Ferris wheels, of amazing diameter. The compartments therein actually moved up or down according to the range of vision desired by the Inventors in their experimenting.

The central part of the city was the most notable of all. Here, with an average diameter of ten hundred feet, rose a circular structure tapering irregularly until it settled to a point six thousand feet in the air. Around this, as a center, ranged terraces, hanging gardens, aerial boulevards, and spiral electric railways.

After viewing this wonderful valley for many hours, the companions took one of the perfected automobiles and covered the long gradual descent to a depth of ten thousand feet perpendicular.

As they neared the base, I looked at Blackana, and asked: "How long have those Schools of Invention been in operation?"

"Since the creation of man."

"What is the real purpose of their existence?"

"To invent devices and weapons helpful to our cause in peace or war, and more particularly to concoct new schemes for the use of the

churches along the King's Highway and the Way of the World."

"Oh! that the earth might see all this foul inwardness, and discern aright the bland deception with which those subtle plots are executed!"

A Santanic smile covered the features of Blackana as he assured me that the earth does know of these things, and has known of them for ages, but is too well pleased with them to offer serious opposition.

In disgust I turned from Blackana and saw that Mr. World and Miss Church-Member had reached the suburbs of the Wizard City where they read this unexpected notice over a large brazen gate:

NONE ADMITTED EXCEPT THEY TO WHOM THE PORTER OPENETH.

"Ah! all our toil may be in vain," sighed Miss Church-Member.

They stood for a brief time in a quandary, discussing how one may know whether or not the Porter will open the gate. Finally the stalwart Porter approached them and spoke: "With what motive and for what purpose would ye enter?"

Mr. World, with native tact, was ready with an answer: "I am in full sympathy with

the work done in this city and have with me my friend who is still a member of a church standing along the King's Highway."

The Porter advanced with graceful bearing and bowed to Miss Church-Member. "Perchance," said he, "you have come to receive some new ideas for the benefit of the church?"

"You have surmised it," she blushingly replied. "The church to which I belong is sadly behind the age in its methods of work. I am hoping that the inventive genius of this city can give me some features new and attractive, that I may, in my missionary work, help to introduce them into antiquated churches."

"Yours is a worthy mission," politely said the Porter, "and I herewith hand you a card which will admit both of you into the department of the city, number seven hundred and seventy-seven."

Instantly the gate flew wide open, and the happy couple passed through joyfully. They walked by the many fairy-like buildings, closing their eyes to all the special scenes so that they might give their first attention to the department indicated by the Porter.

With little difficulty they found the place desired, and handed the card to a curator who conducted them to the general manager.

"I infer, by this card," said the manager,

"that you are hoping to find some new schemes to facilitate the work and service of the church."

"That is our aim," answered Miss Church-Member.

"I am glad that you are so ambitious to keep apace with the times. In this marvelous age of mechanism all things are done by devices and machinery, and the church that would keep step with the spirit of progress must also be run by mechanism. The services of such a congregation should be controlled by a rigid methodical law, so that everything will move like clock-work. The church of to-day, in its movement towards form and ceremony, is approaching the highest laws of universal harmony. This hopeful tendency is most helpful to the soul of man and most pleasing to God."

"Just my idea exactly," chimed in Mr. World. "The churches along the King's Highway are stubbornly fighting these modern improvements. They are very slow in catching up with the spirit of the age. Does that not seem true, Miss Church-Member?"

"I must confess I see it more clearly now than ever. Nature is run by unerring, unchangeable law; why should not all spiritual operations come under the same principle?

Formality, after all, is the highest point to be reached."

"Your mind easily grasps the truth, I perceive," responded the manager. "What can bring things into better form than to get as much machinery as possible into church worship? In this building a thousand experts are constantly employed in devising and perfecting mechanical arrangements to facilitate the services of the church. Perhaps you would be pleased to see some of the results of our work by passing through some of the sub-departments?"

"For my part," replied Miss Church-Member, "I am more than passingly interested in these things, and if Mr. World does, not object to accompany us, I will be grateful to improve this opportunity to look upon your work."

After completing preliminary arrangements I saw the manager conduct his two visitors on the easy running elevator to the floor which was devoted especially to singing.

"As it is your wish," said the manager "to see the latest, we will not tarry at these lesser rooms, but proceed immediately to the corner of the chief experts where I will be pleased to show to you the best novelty on this floor."

They walked down the long room, passing on each side of the aisle one set of busy workers after another. They stopped at one of the far corners and beheld, in advance, the latest novelty to be used for singing in church service.

It was an artificial woman, neatly attired and filled with a complicated mechanism so constructed that when certain electric keys were touched by the unseen operator, articulate sounds like unto a human voice issued forth, while the expression of the whole face, and the natural-like heaving of the breast, all moved in harmony with the artificial sounds. The invention so much resembled a living creature of beauty that Miss Church-Member at first thought it was really human.

Mr. World was so well pleased with the novelty that he unconsciously seated himself upon a couch and looked on in amazement. The beauty of the female form attracted his attention as much as the voice that pealed forth bewitchingly from the lips.

"The greatest thing in the world!" he said after a period of ecstatic silence. "The church that gets such a singer into its choir will have a packed house at every service."

"I never so much as dreamed of such a

thing before. Have any of the churches yet tried the experiment?" wonderingly asked Miss Church-Member.

"The time has not yet come," replied the manager. "Our experts have been perfecting this fine piece of mechanism for many years, but it is not yet quite satisfactory. We shall continue until it is well-nigh perfect. In the meantime we are trying to prepare the way so that the people will gladly receive such an addition to their church machinery. It is our intention to be able to supply *angelettes*, (for that is the name by which this invention will be known) of any size, and with apparel suitable for any special or ordinary occasion of church worship. The angelette is to be so perfected that it will render vocal music without a break. That will be a happy day when people can worship God without singing themselves hoarse or without being annoyed by the discords so prevalent in congregational and choir singing and, moreover, have none of the evil effects that come from choir quarrels."

"I can plainly see," commented Miss Church-Member as they moved toward another floor, "that the church is only in the morning twilight of its progress. The wonders of to-day will pale into insignificance at the coming of the greater things."

They dropped to a lower floor and stepped from the elevator.

"This floor is devoted to the '*Order of Church Service*'" explained the manager. "It is indeed surprising to see what a variety of devices are here suggested to get the churches to pin themselves down to a fixed law of service in such a way that all else must bend to it or appear ridiculous. Some churches, claiming to be led by the Spirit, are constantly out of order. One cannot even imagine what is coming next. That is a foolish, haphazard way of conducting a religious service. We are doing all we can to correct these errors. I will take you at once to the expert's room and let you see the latest piece of mechanism which we hope very soon to offer for public use."

Far out in one end of the building I saw the three enter a room where men were busily engaged at work.

"Will you kindly show these two visitors the workings of your new invention called the 'Service Regulator,'" requested the manager as he looked at the chief inventor.

A large curtain was raised and there it hung. No larger than a family clock. The inventor opened a door of the Regulator, and carefully explained its works. He called their attention especially to a roll of blackboard

canvas that passed from an upper to a lower cylinder when the Regulator was running.

I heard the inventor, in explaining, use these words: "The minister arranges the program in advance and then marks the whole order of service on the canvas roll, allowing as much time for each part of the service as he thinks proper. The canvas is then replaced and the Regulator hung on the wall. When the minute comes to commence services, the Regulator is wound with a key and it starts to run. The canvas, in passing down at a fixed rate, informs the congregation of every change in the service, just as it had been previously planned."

"What think you of it?" asked the manager, after the partial explanation.

"I do not believe that the church of the King's Highway to which I belong could use it. It would tend only to confusion," said Miss Church-Member.

"Only till they become accustomed to it," explained the inventor. "After a few weeks of use its value would be demonstrated. Then the congregation would not part with it under any consideration. You see, Miss Church-Member," he continued as he offered them easy chairs, "there would be a definite time to

close the service. The Regulator would move with the precision of a clock, and nobody would complain about the preacher speaking too long, for he would stop at a fixed time. It is so arranged that a little bell rings five minutes in advance of the time to stop preaching. It is sometimes a great satisfaction for the hearer to know when the sermon is nearly ended, and the Regulator would be a blessed boon to some preachers who find it difficult to stop talking after they get 'warmed up,' as they call it."

"How beautiful the thought that the bells of the Regulator would call the congregation to prayer, and a bell bid the time to change the devotion from prayer to song. You must not forget that this device is intended to educate the minister, choir, and congregation to a fine degree of accuracy in all their public devotions. See what opportunity this device offers for the display of ingenuity and tact on the part of a minister! He can, on the blank spaces, have a few pictures drawn. These will be interesting to children who cannot comprehend his sermon, or to an adult who loses the thread of the discourse. Does it not seem like a good thing for the church?" he asked, as he turned his gaze upon Miss Church-Member.

"It seems more and more that way, and no doubt it will prove helpful if it gets a fair trial.

How does it suit *your* fancy?" she inquired of Mr. World.

"It seems to me that all churches who know a good thing when they see it will get it at any cost. It just meets my idea exactly. I like to see things done decently and in order in the church. It always makes me nervous to get into a church where enthusiasm runs away with the meeting. It makes me feel somewhat as if I were in a trolley car that is running down grade while the motor-man has lost control of the brakes. It makes it uncomfortable to stay or to run."

"Have any of the churches introduced this novelty yet?" inquired Miss Church-Member.

"None as yet. We are waiting for certain developments before placing this device on the market. The agents of our Secret Service will inform us when the time is ripe."

The manager then offered to conduct them to another floor which was devoted to the interests of the Prayer Meeting, but Miss Church-Member, having lost her interest in such kind of services, expressed a desire to visit some other part of the city.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Wizard City.

1. The weird city of inventors described.
2. Its ultimate overthrow predicted in a realistic climax.

I SAW that Miss Church-Member was anxious to visit the vast tower in the central part of the city. So Mr. World, in deference to her wishes, and agreeably to his own desires, escorted her in that direction.

Standing away at some distance, they were soon gazing upward at the awe-inspiring spectacle. Its grandeur and proportions now appeared to be greatly increased.

They could see, with more distinctness, circling around the massive wizard cone, the aerial boulevards, ever alive with private conveyances, and the trolley cars each carrying a variety of passengers.

"Will you accompany me on the trolley to the first series of hangings gardens?" cheerily invited Mr. World.

"If we are permitted, and you think it safe to ascend," she answered in a tremulous voice.

He calmed her fears and led her to the central passenger room at the base of the tower. Here they saw a system of interior elevators carrying throngs of people to the numerous stations between the base and the highest dizzy view-point.

Leading off to the right ran the double trolley system, and to the left the equally wide boulevard, each on the exterior of the massive tower.

I saw the obliging Mr. World, with more than usual courtesy, conduct his friend to a seat on a trolley car bound for the aerial gardens.

The ascent was smooth and afforded delightful opportunities to view, at every desirable angle, the surrounding city and its suburbs.

"This is the most exhilarating ride of my life!" triumphantly cried Miss Church-Member as they circled higher and higher so gradually that more than ten miles were traveled ere the objective point was reached one thousand feet from the base.

Here lay the variety gardens, suspended from the rigid side of the tower by a feat of architectural engineering surpassing anything in the natural world.

Around the gardens the boulevards and the

trolley lines circled horizontally, and also passed through some of the huge corridors which, on this level, diverge from the interior elevators toward the exterior gardens.

When the trolley car reached this height Miss Church-Member at once fixed her eyes on the ponderous pillars on each side of the converging corridors, for she knew that more than four thousand feet of the tower's amazing weight rested on these defiant granites.

Mr. World and his pleasing friend meandered amongst the multitude from one to another of the hanging gardens, drinking in all the vain glories that this aerial world afforded. At last, wearied by the endless succession of extraordinary sights, they stole away to a quiet retreat on the outer edge of a garden farthest from the tower's center. Reclining in hammocks, they conversed of all the greatness of the world.

Looking upward they saw, fifteen hundred feet above them, the next series of hanging gardens; and during the lull in the music near by, they caught the strains falling from the upper orchestras like music from Heaven.

"Will you go with me still higher to taste the sweetness of a more ethereal level?'

Intoxicated with the charms already felt, Miss Church-Member was ready for any height.

Upward they went on the venturesome trolley, admiring the phenomenal ride and the scenery it opened to their view in panoramic splendor. Their course wound round and round until they came to the horizontal circle twenty-five hundred feet above the base.

This was a place of more refinement and beauty. The touch of the finer artists was seen in all the arrangement and style of the terraces and hanging gardens, but especially in the rich variety of flowers and plants that added their wealth to the novel combinations.

Mr. World carefully guarded his much esteemed friend during their sight-seeing from garden to garden, for at times they encountered throngs of people.

I saw them eventually seek rest on rustic chairs where their conversation deepened into the relations they sustained one to the other, succeeded at last by a tender, thoughtful silence.

In the midst of their reveries they noticed a little spider, swinging on its silken thread, floating in the air between them.

"You rude little creature! Why do you come, at such a time, between my friend and me?" said Miss Church-Member in a half humorous mood.

"It may be for a purpose, dear. Perhaps

the little insect poses here to remind us that we can never escape the foe that seeks to separate us."

"Quite an ingenious explanation," she said with deepening seriousness. "But who is that lurking foe who seeks our separation?"

"'Tis better to learn to know your enemies than to be told of them. Hence look through your eyes askance."

Just at this instant Miss Church-Member raised her hand and caught the little intruder, placing it alive into a locket which she had secretly carried ever since she had visited the Pawn Shop.

"What can be the meaning of that?" queried Mr. World as he saw, through the glass of the little lid, the struggling insect.

"So may it be to any foe that seeks to separate us," she explained.

"Then let me carry the locket," he suggested. "You have captured the foe; allow me to keep him imprisoned."

There was a happy exchange of glances as she pressed the little prison into his hand. "It is yours forever," she pledged under the sway of her rising emotions.

And he, accepting it with a warm heart, spoke thus in glowing words: "I accept the endless task and also pledge to the utmost of

my power to keep any foe imprisoned that seeks to rob your life of any passing happiness."

"Shall we go still higher?" he soon asked as he fixed his eyes on the dizzy terraces two thousand feet above them.

"In your presence I fear no height," was her confiding response.

The trolley cars ascended no higher, so they proceeded to the interior elevators. But they were told that no visitors were allowed above that point—that privilege being reserved alone for the inventors.

"Are we permitted to visit the interior apartments of this tower, even below us?" asked Mr. World wistfully.

"They are all doubly sealed. No one but an expert inventor, true and tried in our master's service, ever passes through these secret chambers."

"May we know what particular branch of work is done in this tower?"

"It is devoted alone to the invention and testing of weapons of warfare for the armies of our master, especially for the sharp-shooters stationed along the so-called King's Highway."

Miss Church-Member trembled at this announcement and urged Mr. World to conduct

her to the base of the tower that they might visit other parts of the city.

* * * * * * *

As I was looking at all these things, a flash of light, coming from one side, blinded my vision, and as I turned I saw a heavenly messenger in a blaze of glory.

"Hither, hither!" beckoned the sweet-faced angel.

I was instantly at his side without effort, except an act of volition. He transported me almost instantaneously to the apex of the great tower in the Wizard City.

There I stood without fear under the sweet charms of my angel guide who floated gently about me in the air.

"O mortal man," calmly spoke the angel, "thou shalt now be privileged, for a brief space of time, to gaze upon this Wizard City as angels do. Thy memory shall be strengthened so that thou shalt not forget the vision of these carnal things."

Then, in a manner surpassing all things human, scales fell from my eyes, and I was struck with horror at the awful sight that lay before me.

"Look thou first into the interior of this tower," bade the angel, as he pointed downward.

All things were open to my view, and I saw many of the bright geniuses of the world in league with the imps of darkness, all busily engaged in the secret service of Satan.

I saw how Satan used the ingenuity of man to carry forward his infamous schemes. Instead of the old rifles used in the earlier days of Christianity I saw in this tower almost numberless kinds of fatal weapons which send forth their poisonous and deadly discharges without smoke or sound, so that the wounded, not knowing whence the missiles come, might imagine that they were smitten of God.

The angel informed me that every year this fiendish tower puts out into the hands of its agents many new devices, either for poisoning or wounding the disciples who travel on the King's Highway, and who by any kind of negligence come within reach of Satan's forces.

"Seest thou," continued my guide, "with what cunning Satan hath builded this tower? By its exterior beauty he gaineth the confidence of the unwary, and thus winneth countless thousands to his cause. And seest thou the depth to which it reaches, not six thousand feet below us, but ten times six thousand feet, into the bowels of the earth?"

Then could I see, at a glance, the whole under-ground dominions stretching their bor-

ders far, wide, and deep. There was a small empire of groveling imps, each bent on the work of his particular branch.

"Look thou now into the apartments of those ponderous wheels," directed my glorious guide.

Neither metal nor granite obstructed my vision. I saw delicate and complex machinery, and half-human creatures in league with mortal man, all bending to their tasks.

"They all work in league with the Devil's Optical College. The inventive genius of Hell hath contrived, in these graded departments, all the modern lenses that are so terribly warping the vision of an alarming number in the church and the world.

"And seest thou," continued the angel, as he pointed to a far section of the city, "those inventors plying their ingenuity in behalf of Satan's Medical Colleges and Hospitals?

"And also witness, in that nearer section, the viler groups at work inventing snares and traps for Satan's allies to use in catching Heaven-bound pilgrims.

"Also behold," he continued, turning to another part of the city, "that special class of geniuses who work for Satan's general emissaries as they journey far and wide to do exploits.

How terribly they influence the weaker servants of our King!"

Then I stood gazing, as the angel continued his intrepreting, until I had seen the foul workings of this whole city.

I was so filled with a mixture of grief and indignation that I cried out in painful anguish: "Why does not God send thunderbolts from his eternal throne, and smite this city to fragments?"

Then the sweet angel calmly answered: "Not until the worm ceaseth to crawl, and thistles no more infest the ground. Till then the patience of God endureth and his sunshine falleth on the temples of Virtue and of Vice."

"And what comes at the end of patience?"

"Then shall the taint of sin be purged from the earth, for every temple and pest-hole of Satan, including this whole Wizard City, will be consumed by an awful fire whose lurid light will glimmer long after the metals and granites of this great Tower shall have been reduced to ashes amidst the general ruin."

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Festival.

1. The whole scheme of merchandising in the church is laid bare as Satan explains the origin of the word "Festival."

LOOKING once again through the open door, I saw that Mr. World and Miss Church-Member, after leaving the Wizard City, had gained admission to the auditorium where the Ways and Means Committee was in session.

Miss Church-Member at once retired to the waiting-room in the rear, and sat quietly perusing a book while her companion remained in the large hall and listened to the proceedings.

An agent of Satan occupied the chair. He was dressed in pleasing costume, and controlled the assemblage with parliamentary dignity.

When Mr. World took a seat the large committee was engaged in a warm debate over a certain piece of ground occupying a space midway between the King's Highway and the Broad Highway. This eligible site had been used for holding church-festivals to raise funds for the maintenance of gospel work.

A few wealthy friends of Satan wanted this location to erect on it a club-house wherein they might revel and carouse as they wished.

The question arose among the members of the committee as to which of the two uses would best subserve the purpose of their master who held a claim on the land.

The chairman arose, after listening to the arguments at length, and addressed the audience with great coolness and deliberation: "Most worthy members of this committee," commenced he, "you have spoken many words of truth this day. Your interest in this matter only shows your loyalty to our cause. 'Club-House or Festival?' that is the question. Surely we cannot dispense with either, but rather must we maintain both at any cost. As for this place in question, I am decidedly in favor of holding it for the use of the church. The Club-House will find a location elsewhere, but this ground is so favorably situated for church-merchandising that I urge you to hold it for such purposes. Have we not seen how eagerly the two classes mingle here? This place, being so accessible to all parties, makes it possible for the church to gather larger numbers and thereby reap greater financial results —which is the principal object of the church in holding these delightful affairs. Since the

church is well supplied with everything it needs except money, let us do it a favor by rendering some assistance in that direction. Then we may reasonably expect that the church will, in return, do us a favor by being less hostile to our methods of operation, which, as you will admit, are highly honorable."

This speech had the desired effect. A resolution was quickly passed in harmony with the opinion of the chairman.

The curiosity of Mr. World was now satisfied, for he had seen this famous committee in session. Therefore he repaired to the waiting-room, and while conducting Miss Church-Member from the building their attention was arrested by this announcement written in bold letters near the exit:

ANY ONE WISHING REFRESHMENTS CAN FIND THEM AT THE FESTIVAL ON THE CHURCH GROUNDS.

"How does that announcement suit you?" interrogated Mr. World.

"It comes at an opportune time," she answered, her face brightening. "I had been hoping that we might soon have lunch."

They had gone but a few steps from the door when they heard cheery voices and strains

The Festival.

Here the Church receives money for souls from the Devil, while the Devil gets souls for money from the Church.

of music lending attractive life to the festival. Urged on by the thought of a pleasant hour, they quickened their pace unconsciously and were soon within sight of the grounds.

I saw the multitude gathering in the grove. The mingling of the church and the world was so complete that one could scarcely tell from which path many had come.

On this intervening ground everything appealed to the appetite, and the patrons knew that the more they ate or purchased the greater would be the success of the festival. Therefore some ate even unto gluttony for the benefit of the church, while the agents of Satan with skillful aim were sending poisoned arrows into the heart of true benevolence, and also endeavoring to arrest the minds of Christians so that they might pursue the Broader Path after their routine at the festival was ended.

Thus I saw, falling into the coffers of the church, filthy lucre not sanctified by prayer or sacrifice, and from this seed the church hoped to reap a holy harvest.

Mr. World and his companion spent a delightful season with the company and, thanks to Mr. World's plethoric purse, proved themselves pleasingly generous in their patronage. Finally Miss Church-Member excused herself

from Mr. World and joined a company of young ladies who were engaged in joyous pleasures.

Mr. World, now alone, was walking leisurely about the grounds when Satan appeared and sauntered at his side. "Are you not fearful," asked Mr. World in the midst of a conversation, "that many of your subjects will be led into the Narrow Path by tarrying at this place and associating with so many Christians?"

"Not in the least," he replied, "for at such places as this I gain more subjects than I lose. So I expect to encourage forever sacred-merchandising all along my route. The churches are glad to use this ground even though it belongs to me, for I concede to them all the money. Naturally I prefer souls to money."

"How did this word 'festival' originate?" queried Mr. World after a brief pause in the conversation.

"With pleasure I will explain. Once upon a time I called together my generals to determine upon new methods of winning converts to our cause, and promised to confer upon the one who should suggest the best plan, the honorable title 'Fast Devil.'

"A long intermission was granted to give my aids time to use their ingenuity in plan-

ning. All Hell was filled with students, each one striving to win the title.

"At a given signal my cohorts re-assembled. Thus before me lay a vast army of anxious faces. I gave each one, who desired, an opportunity to speak. The sun revolved on his axis seven times ere the argument was finished. During this debate there was comparative peace on earth."

"Pray tell me," further asked Mr. World, "What was the trend of their suggestions?"

"I could relate it all, for I have every word recorded, but I shall not weary you."

"But at least give me a general idea."

"Willingly. One of my generals arose and said: 'We can change some of our tactics without loss to our cause. The sword and torture only strengthen our enemies. We should resort more to the '*wolf-in-sheep's-clothing* method.'

"He could speak no more. A thundering sound of voices drowned his utterances. Thousands of my loyal leaders seconded his plans.

"At last one of the speakers, who indeed won the prize, earnestly proposed a grand scheme, and the vast multitudes listened with rapt attention. His speech was short but fiery, and, rising to the occasion, he demanded that all his comrades should unite to destroy the simple voluntary spirit of Christian benevo-

lence so that the church might go begging before the world and even resort to all manner of mercantile business for its support. The speaker declared that if the church could be induced to adopt such measures it would tend to divert her mind from interfering with the work to which he and his auditors were all loyally pledged.

"This speech had a marvelous effect, and there was a deafening roar of voices in the applause which continued for a long space of time.

"Then followed an animated discussion in which a host of trusted leaders engaged. Each one commented on the winning speech and offered suggestions how to awaken a trading interest in the church. It was conceded that first of all the church must feel the necessity of resorting to business. Accordingly a large committee was appointed to work systematically amongst the churches on earth, inducing their members to depart from the customs of the early church.

"This committee did yeoman service and shrewdly prepared the way for the more complete work in harmony with the views of Fast Devil. Through the ages it succeeded in gradually influencing the church to engage in all manner of performances and trading schemes to

gain support. The work of this committee is not yet at an end, for nearly every week we hear of some innovation which has crept into the church, or some new form of merchandising into which it has fortunately entered.

"It is indeed gratifying that the church is casting off her unsightly spiritual robe and putting on the costume of merriment and trade. I hope the day will soon come when the church will have still less of the spiritual nonsense and more of these up-to-date methods to secure funds for its support."

As Satan spoke his last words he bid a brief adieu to Mr. World and hastened away to the side of a young man who was almost persuaded to yield to some elevating influence. I suddenly looked at Blackana whose presence I had well-nigh forgotten.

"Have you been taking your ease in sleep?" I asked as an involuntary shudder shook my frame.

"I never sleep. Suns may wax and wane, nations rise and fall, peoples live and die, but I am awake forever."

"Did you hear the conversation between Satan and Mr. World?"

"Every word of it."

"Were you present when Satan held that great convocation to devise plans for more effi-

cient work against the church of Jesus Christ on earth?"

"I attended every session."

"And did you hear the speech of Fast Devil?"

"I heard every word."

"And did Satan give to Mr. World a true account of the address?"

"He gave only a condensed and garbled rendering of it."

"Then I command you, O Blackana, to give me a full reproduction of Fast Devil's speech as far as you are able to translate the language of Hell into words that are intelligible to me. Can you remember each thought?"

"I must remember, for I have not the power to forget," and Blackana groaned aloud. "Oh, that I could bury in oblivion the myriad thoughts that sting me with remorse!" He paused a moment. "Am I to give you the whole speech as Fast Devil delivered it originally?"

"Thought for thought, and gesture for gesture," I answered with authority.

Ere the last syllable fell from my lips Blackana was suddenly transformed into a more terrifying creature than he was himself. I was paralyzed at the sight of the weird mon-

ster which I learned was the image of Fast Devil.

There he stood, tall and erect, seven times the height of man, with sinews like iron-rope and with a face defying human description. His eyes were fiery with life, and determination marked every movement as he stepped forward to speak.

Notwithstanding my consciousness of being sustained by supernatural power, I trembled as Blackana reproduced this noted speech of Fast Devil:

"Most honored chief and glorious master," he commenced, "be thou indulgent as I speak to thee and unto these my comrades who lie in anxious posture over this vast expanse of Hell. I am here to state an issue of which we have heard murmurings for many an age. To prepare for this hour I have taxed my ingenuity to its utmost."

Then with striking gestures of his awful arms he passionately continued: "Hope is no more crushed within me as I view the wide and measureless field of our possibilities, for I see empires within our reach if we but cease brooding over our dismal past and let this bright prospect kindle its flames within us. What spur need we to move us on but to look up and

see the resplendent regions whence we fell, till hatred starts afresh within our beings and our every passion moves to its control."

With an outward swing of his great right arm he asked in strong appealing tones: "How can we best succeed against the church in which our enemy glories so unceasingly? What inroads can we make? In what manner shall we advance?"

He vigorously seized a book. "Here is a Bible, borrowed from a saint. I turned its pages over and over that I might learn what pained the heart of Christ most grievously, vexing his inmost soul with indignation. What was it?" vociferously interrogated Fast Devil as he flung the book to the scorching winds of Hell. "'Twas that which hindered the cause of Christ most efficiently—*prostituting the house of God to worldly purposes.* Have we forgotten the vehemence with which this arch-enemy drove the money kings from His sacred abode, saying unto them: 'My house is a house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves,' and how we like sneaking cowards crawled away, and thus our glorious scheme went by default?"

Then Blackana uttered his final appeal with all the swing of his mighty body and the low vibrant thunder of his voice. "Back to your forts! Oh, back! ye dormant hosts

around me ! Not in the strength of arms, but with the subtlest webs that Hell can weave, and with the snares of silent treachery. We need no stronger weapons, and for our dress we will don sheep's clothing of the finest wool. Thus who amongst the church can tell that we are not seeking her highest good? *Then as we strike at the heart of voluntary offering in the church, so shall we kill the spirit that gives it birth. The carcass of this dead spirit unburied we shall drag through the church for ages, and the germs of disease arising therefrom will bring more death into the ranks of our foes than all our weapons of warfare ever did.*"

Blackana instantly resumed his former shape, and "while I was musing the fire burned." I then looked out toward the festival ground and saw that Satan had returned to Mr. World and was explaining to him how helpful these festivals were to Christians.

"Aside from the moral and religious influence," he remarked, "how could the church defray her expenses if she did not engage in some innocent forms of merchandising, or use some novel scheme to decoy money from her admirers. Surely there can be no better way," continued the Devil with an unholy grin. "If the church would maintain her honor before the world, she must not do differently. *I*

am satisfied if only the old way of voluntary giving is more and more discarded by the church."

"But you began your former recital," reminded Mr. World, "to inform me how the word 'Festival' originated. You have not yet succeeded in making it clear to me."

"It originated from the phrase of honor which was given the prize-winner, Fast Devil, but we changed the wording somewhat so that it might not seem obnoxious to the church."

Then, by a peculiar method of concrete marking, Satan continued: "The following is the process of development from the phrase to the word: 'Fast Devil;' '*Fest Evil;*' 'FESTIVAL.'"

CHAPTER XIX.

The Missionary College.

1. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member visit the great college and are strongly influenced in favor of Satan's teachings concerning missionary work.

THE fellowship of Mr. World and Miss Church-Member grew increasingly delightful as they journeyed forth from the Festival. In their company were a few church-members who had also enjoyed the physical pleasures of the Festival and who preferred to reach Heaven by the most convenient path.

The merry band of companions soon reached a certain Missionary Station which was controlled by pilgrims from the King's Highway. The travelers were all very much amused at seeing tracts and other pieces of literature scattered over the Highway in front of the station.

"How much one can get for nothing!" sneeringly remarked Mr. Bigot, as he pointed to the literature strewn across the way.

"Surely there can be no harm in looking at such pieces of paper," said Mrs. Lucre-Love as she lifted a booklet from the path and commenced a quiet perusal of it.

"And what is it all about?" queried another who saw the eyes of Mrs. Lucre-Love fixed intently on the pamphlet.

"Oh, it is nothing new! Only the old monotonous story of the heathen, followed by the usual appeal for funds. Evidently it is some sharper's scheme to rob the people of their money."

Mr. World was near enough to hear her answer and with evident disgust he asked: "Where can one get reliable information on this subject, anyhow?"

"At one of the Missionary Colleges, of course," answered two or three in unison. "Yes, and I know from past experience that you will soon be at one. This station and this literature is all the evidence we need," added Mrs. Lucre-Love.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member thence walked alone and soon beheld the great Missionary College whose higher domes kissed the lower clouds of heaven.

"Surely some great missionary enthusiast must have erected these edifices," said Miss Church-Member as they were turning to enter the section devoted to Home Missionary Work.

The entrance ways were so crowded with students and visitors that Mr. World escorted his companion with difficulty to the plaza to-

ward which the twenty-one halls of this section converged.

The view of this part of the College from the plaza was at once beautiful and inspiring.

Hall No. 4 was the first place they decided to enter. Over the door these words were hung:

HOME MISSION WORK FINANCIALLY CONSIDERED.

Having reached the interior, Miss Church-Member, in particular, was surprised to see the many busy thousands in the large rooms of the hall, and to note with what carefulness every item of expense was kept of all the Home Mission Work of the world.

Then they sought the main lecture-room whose large seating capacity was already well taken with a motley crowd of students and visitors.

The lecturer was a woman of shrewd appearance. Her face was void of sympathy and her voice somewhat masculine. Her address was over one-half finished when the two companions entered. They listened carefully to her words which were in part as follows:

"We are not to worship money, yet we are to guard against squandering it. The person who wastes one dollar sets a bad example to others and brings injury to himself. Woman is

criticized for wastefulness in dress. I stand here to defend her, not because she is altogether innocent, but because her accusers are equally guilty in the same and in other directions. The money wasted in Home Missionary Work would feed the starving of all the world. Where does this money come from? The greater part of it comes from the purses of those who are burdened with all manner of financial obligations What right have such people to rob others of their dues in order to support Home Mission Work? O, that the time may soon come when consistency will be manifested, and so much money no longer wasted in this sentimental manner!"

The speaker proceeded, but the interest of the two listeners was flagging; so they quietly left the room.

They next entered Hall No. 17, devoted to "*The Results of Home Missionary Work.*" But after remaining a very short time Miss Church-Member declared that she was interested more directly in Foreign Missionary Work.

In deference to her wishes he at once accompanied her to the second section of the Missionary College, which was much larger than the first. Miss Church-Member led the way into one of the large halls where Satan, through his agents, gave special instruction

concerning "*The Condition of the Heathen.*" They listened to four speakers from whose brief addresses they received food for thought.

The first speaker expounded the theory that "*Ignorance is Bliss,*" and declared that the heathen were happy and comfortable in their present condition.

The second lecturer argued, at greater length, that the heathen were free from all responsibility as long as they were left alone, and that if God held them accountable, then their vague worship answered for a good conscience, and therefore they would reach Heaven by a simpler path.

The third speaker declared that the heathen were now as God had made them, and therefore just as they should be. To establish this theory he used garbled arguments of predestination.

The fourth assured the audience that the heathen, in due order, would rise to loftier conceptions by the same natural processes as the civilized peoples of to-day have risen from their rude primitive conditions.

After examining some heathen relics the two companions spent some time near-by in a hall of the same section devoted to "*The Effects of the Gospel on the Heathen.*"

Its teachers were very emphatic in their

utterances. They affirmed that the Gospel did not benefit the heathen, except that it brought to them civilization with all its attendant responsibilities and vices.

One lecturer to whom they listened was very fiery. In a scathing manner the speaker pronounced censure on the Christian church for her ill-advised policy in Foreign Missionary Work.

Mr. World and his close friend left the second section of the College without pausing to visit the recitation rooms where Satan's Missionary Experts were constantly teaching graded classes. In a few moments they entered the largest edifice of the Missionary College which was erected for the special purpose of teaching "*The Comparative Need of Home and Foreign Missionary Work.*"

Upon entering, Miss Church-Member was surprised at the interior arrangements of the rooms and the exceptional beauty of their finish.

After a much needed rest in one of the sub-departments, they went to one of the higher floors, hoping to hear another lecture on some missionary theme.

Mr. World smiled as they entered the room and saw that a woman occupied the platform.

In a jovial manner he remarked that "women must be the best missionary orators."

The speaker was keen-eyed and shrewd, and well knew how to use sophistry in pathos and wit. She expounded to the audience the doctrine of Satan under whose service she was pledged to loyalty

"We are all missionaries," she commenced, "and cannot escape the responsibility which is imposed upon us. Our duty is imperative. We stand at the open door of opportunity and enter so slowly into the fields of work all around us. When one sees rank bigotry and narrow-mindedness on every hand, he feels like blushing that he ever sent money to convert the heathen in far-away lands. The heathen at our own doors are more blood-thirsty than the cannibals of distant climes. I appeal to you all, noble women especially, to rid your minds of the fallacy of foreign work and do the foreign work at home, even inside your own doors. (Applause, principally among the men, in which Mr. World heartily joined.) I must confess that, at one time, I was almost overcome by this craze of evangelizing the world. My delusion went so far that I could see visions of China, Africa, or the remote islands of the sea, and even imagine that I heard voices calling me thither. One night I dreamed a dream,

the kindest of them all. I saw a woman standing on the shore of a river, her children drowning at her side. But she, unmindful of her own blood, was hastening to launch a boat into the stream that she might rescue a sinking dog on the farther shore. 'Ungrateful wretch,' I cried aloud on my bed so that I was awakened by my own voice. I was so moved by the dream that I could sleep no more that night, but sought for some one to make known unto me the interpretation thereof. I soon learned, to my personal shame, that I was that woman. I then and there vowed that I would no more be guilty of so great a crime. (Great applause, with cries of "noble decision!" "common sense!") From that hour I assure you that I have been trying to evangelize the world—not the one across the river, (applause) but the one on this side. (Applause.)

"I have been working at my own home and find a task almost too great for me to do. If I should ever see the day when I get through with my own family, including my husband, (great applause among the women) I can then commence busying myself with my neighbors' affairs and tell them also how to become perfect. (Laughter and applause.)

"God never made a greater world than when he instituted the home. The woman who

becomes inspired with international evangelization would do well if she would learn how to season victuals and cook them aright (shouting and applause among the men) and to give proper care to her home and her children. This is home missionary work." (Continued applause.) The speaker was about to be seated, but the applause was rising, so she stepped forward again. "If this kind of missionary work be adopted, then the church will no longer be drained by repeated collections for missionary work, and that money will flow into better channels and prove an impetus to trade." She stepped quickly from the stage while the final burst of applause rang loud and prolonged.

"That was the greatest and most sensible missionary speech to which I have ever listened in my life," chuckled Mr. World as he was moving toward the door with his companion.

I learned from Blackana that this Missionary College of the Devil has wrought great mischief in the missionary operations of the church, and that Satan glories in the fact that he has succeeded in sending these nefarious doctrines to the hearts of so many church-members and thereby kept a large part of the world in spiritual darkness.

Then I took a passing glance at the King's Highway and saw a shining pilgrim commun-

ing with God and casting his eyes over the hills of Time, looking for the coming of his Redeemer. From his lips this prayer arose, like sweet incense to Heaven: "O God, hasten the day when thy church will unite and go forth into all the world to preach the Gospel, instead of so large a part of it giving ear to the teaching of Satan's missionary schools, thereby delaying the coming of thy dear Son!"

CHAPTER XX.

The Rival Churches.

1. The two companions visit a church on the By-Path and are disgusted.

2. Then they are delighted with the services of the Church of the World whose minister they visit.

I SAW the two happy companions leaving the Missionary College and proceeding on the Broad Highway. They were engaged in censuring the church for what they conceived to be its waste of time, talent, and means in trying to convert the heathen.

This harmony of opinions was most pleasing to Mr. World. It was in sweet contrast to what he had previously experienced in his earlier acquaintance with Miss Church-Member. Her likeness to him and her love for him were becoming more noticeable as their fellowship continued, for she observed *through her faithful lenses* that his moral purity and refinement were above par.

While they were yet criticising the church, Mr. World espied, not far ahead of them, another path leading to the right.

"Behold the narrow path yonder," he exclaimed in a somewhat surprised manner. "If it were not for a happy change in you, I would now be subjected to a score of sickly sentiments as to leaving this way and going with you to a harder one. Have I conjectured rightly?" he asked in a cheerful vein.

"It is all too true," she confessed. "If people could but see their folly before placing it on exhibition, what a blessing it would be to all around them!"

On the By-Path stood a small church within easy reach of the Broad Highway. As they came nearer to the place of worship they heard music which attracted them to the very door of the church.

"Let us enter," she suggested.

"I shall enjoy your pleasure," he courteously replied. "Only see to it carefully that your glasses are properly adjusted, lest some strange glimmerings of light should bring pain or ruin to your eyes."

I saw Miss Church-Member re-adjusting her lenses while they were entering the church and taking seats in the rear of the room.

The minister led the congregation in a fervent prayer which seemed to be altogether too Puritanical in the estimation of Mr. World and his friend.

The preacher began his sermon. As he proceeded his countenance became more radiant. His clear eyes sparkled aright, and as he preached Christ and Him crucified even his raiment seemed bright and shining.

It proved to be a memorable meeting. A few who evidently intended to ridicule were pricked in their hearts and, much to the disgust of some, cried out: "What must I do to be saved?"

"Fools who came to scoff remained to pray."

"This is affectation in the extreme," whispered Mr. World scornfully.

"Quite enough of it, indeed," she returned.

The whole affair seemed to her so unreal that her mind could scarcely believe that she was ever connected seriously with such a method of worship.

Still worse than all, through her warped vision and the aid of her eye-glasses well adjusted, she was led to discern a wicked motive in the mind of the minister. His utterances also appeared miserably narrow.

At the request of Miss Church-Member they left the room, congratulating themselves that they were not compelled to remain longer.

"All this reminds me of how simple and foolish I once was," she said plaintively as they descended the front steps. "Is it possible

that I was ever seriously connected with such a kind of worship? Yet ignorance is the mother of endless follies. Can we find no better place of worship than this?"

"Better by far! I can easily lead you to a church where great varieties of truthful and yet comfortable doctrines are preached, pleasing to the ear, and fascinating to the senses. No blunt fellow stands in its pulpit, but rather a cultured and highly refined gentleman of modern type who delights to keep apace with the customs of the age. If you desire, I will gladly accompany you thither. It would be sad indeed were you to be turned away from religion altogether just because your own church is so unsuited to your advanced ideas."

The face of Miss Church-Member brightened, and she quickly expressed her desire to accompany him to such a church. Therefore Mr. World improved the first opportunity and conducted her to a large and beautiful edifice.

"Here," he said, "is the kind of church to which I am inclined. I give very liberally to the support of the Gospel as here preached. I like the broad-mindedness and liberal spirit which is manifested within the domain of this denomination."

"In what else does this church differ from the one to which I belong?" she asked.

"In this denomination your conscience is not always pricked and you can do many innocent things without being called a sinner. You may also consult your personal feelings relative to church duties. One is not bound down by a galling yoke of ecclesiastical tyranny. Best of all, this is an up-to-date church. You can learn something about science, philosophy, and civil government. In your church one must listen to the thread-bare doctrines of the Bible, much to his personal discomfort. Your minister exercises a censorship over the consciences of his members from which I prefer to be excused. In fine, I can say that nothing is developed there but a long face and a sanctimonious soberness."

They entered the church, and were conducted to a front pew.

The opening services were enrapturing to Miss Church-Member, and seemed unlike anything she had ever heard. The operatic rendition of the music, the ritualistic cast of the prayer and the soothing effect of the rhetorical essay which took the place of a sermon, all exercised a fascinating influence.

As the minister neared the close of his essay, he said: "Christ intended that man should enjoy liberty in this life, and that he should educate himself in the best schools of

art, science, and literature. Therefore one has a right to seek, in this infinitely great world of ours, for such things as will best educate his natural and spiritual being. If the theatre can supply part of this demand, let him go, as a student, and drink into his soul through the senses of sight and hearing. If the dance can elevate him somewhat in demeanor and classical grace, let him go there as a student. If some milder types of indulgence can bring him into a more thorough knowledge of the weaknesses of human nature, let him indulge, but only as a student with sincerest motives. In general, I would say, that your conscience is a reasonably safe guide and you cannot go far wrong by obeying its dictates. Be a student all the days of your life; familiarize yourself with both the virtues and the vices of human kind that you may be better qualified to defend the right and resist the wrong."

At the conclusion of the services I heard the minister announce that the church would hold a "razzle-dazzle" party on Friday evening, at which he hoped there would be a good attendance, as the church treasury was in sad need of replenishment. He also announced that all the prayer-meetings would be discontinued for two weeks, so as to permit a thorough practice for the coming Cantata.

After the dismissal of the congregation the two continued on their journey, which was ever opening to them new avenues of delight.

Miss Church-Member expressed supreme satisfaction regarding the scholarly sermon to which she had listened, and confessed that she had never heard a preacher in her own church take such advanced positions concerning the nature of human liberty.

Mr. World felt elated because his companion had found such exquisite delight in the worship of the same church to which he adhered. He also remembered, with pleasure, that they had safely passed the little church on the By-Way, which represented the same doctrines as the church to which his now confiding friend belonged.

"Would it not be more in keeping with your advanced Christianity if you were to withdraw your membership from your present connection and join a church more fitting to your degree?" were his suave words of invitation.

"That would be a natural question to consider after I know the rules and regulations of the church to which I intend to go."

"That only indicates your wisdom," said Mr. World insinuatingly. "Since you desire more congenial Christian fellowship, why not

give your attention to the church toward which I lean?"

"An agreeable suggestion," she said. "Where can I get the desired information?"

He answered the question by taking her to the home of the minister, and there introducing the subject.

She was very favorably impressed by the courteous reception accorded her by so great and dignified a person.

"You come seeking knowledge of the church. I assure you, my young friend, that I will gladly answer any questions. May I take the privilege of asking you whether you have ever belonged to any church?"

She flushed with shame. "I will be true and tell you all. I had a great experience some years ago, when I was seeking Christ. In answer to my earnest petitions, I saw the most welcome beams of light that ever touched my poor soul. I knew I was converted to Christ and continued in his service ever since, although somewhat differently since I came into fellowship with Mr. World. I joined the church in which I was converted and still hold my membership there."

"How did you get so well acquainted with the happy Mr. World?"

Miss Church-Member answered half in

quaint humor and half in pathos: "I, at one time, thought he was a very wicked fellow, and in a prayerful mood I endeavored to rescue him. I knew he would not come by his own effort to my way of thinking, so I entered into an alliance with him for the purpose of quietly leading him unto the King's Highway. I soon saw the bigotry of my former self, and through the kindness of Mr. World I have already been aided in my vision and improved in dress, and, better than all, I have enjoyed the privilege of worshiping my God in a more fitting temple, where true freedom is preached and practicd."

"Then it is your purpose to continue being a Christian, although you have left the King's Highway?" asked the delighted clergyman.

"As long as I live I will hold to my religion," she said emphatically.

"Then you are sound indeed both in purpose and doctrine. Did you wish to be visibly connected with our church?"

"I wish to know first its rules and conditions of entrance."

The minister opened his Guide Book and, duly adjusting his spectacles, read in a pleasing manner: "Anyone wishing to unite with this church must comply with the following rules and regulations:

"RULE I.—He must reach a reasonable degree of respectability, or endeavor to do so.

"RULE II.—He must not wear clothing so plain as to attract undue attention.

"RULE III.—He must not tolerate or countenance the common nuisances so prevalent in the churches of the King's Highway.

"RULE IV.—He must ever manifest a liberal spirit so as to keep in touch with the progress of the world.

"RULE V.—He may engage in any practice that will give enlightenment on either the dark or the bright side of life. Members of this church ought to have a well-rounded education.

"RULE VI.—He must never take advantage in buying or selling, except in such cases like Jacob's, where he can bring good to himself or profit to the church.

"RULE VII.—He must never give way to his temper, except in such cases where his personal liberty or his church is attacked.

"RULE VIII.—He is to cultivate grace and etiquette through whatever channel possible.

"RULE IX.—He is to be faithful in attending the services of his own church, except in cases of sickness or disinclination.

"RULE X.—It must be his constant aim to reach Heaven by traveling diligently on a way

wide enough to hold the attention and respect of an enlightened age.

"These are our general rules. We have several thousand regulations covering every phase or avenue of life."

"What I have just now heard are certainly not as iron-clad as the rules of my church. Nothing is said of conversion, or spirituality, or of the Holy Spirit, or of the other Persons of the Trinity," commented Miss Church-Member.

"No, not of anything that is antiquated or, in other words, 'out of date.' The main church on earth must deal with practical things."

"What do you call 'conversion' in your church, or do you not believe in it?"

"Beyond any doubt we believe in conversion. Just as soon as a person confesses his faith in our general rules he is converted, and is at once a good Christian. The Bible says that if one will only believe he is safe: or 'saved already' as the true Greek rendering has it."

"Then you hold to the Bible strictly?"

"We are the only church that does really and truly hold to the Bible. We believe and teach it as it is preserved for the ages in the original Hebrew and Greek."

"But I notice that many of your rules seem

to be at variance with certain parts of the Bible," she boldly declared.

"True enough, but those certain parts of the Bible do not belong to the genuine Scriptures. Whatever you find in the Bible contrary to our rules and regulations you can safely conclude is an interpolation and does not form a part of the inspired Word. Let me assure you, Miss Church-Member, that our discipline was written with great care by eminent scholars of the Hebrew and Greek; therefore how could there have been any error in it?"

Miss Church-Member was slightly confused, and evidenced by her manner that she was ready to depart.

"May I ask before you go," continued the minister, "whether you are willing to join our church?"

"I have been thinking," she replied, "that I could do more good in my own church, not by fighting it, but by using my influence quietly in trying to get some of its members to be more like I am. I have always had a missionary spirit. In that way I might satisfy my earlier ambitions and lead some one out of the mist into a better light."

"A very bright idea," testified Mr. World,

advancing with Miss Church-Member toward the door.

"And may you succeed in your plans," added the minister as they were stepping from the room. "There are millions who belong to my church in spirit, but who hold visible connection with some radical church of the King's Highway. They are doing great service in eradicating old-time methods and planting the banners of a new liberty such as we three enjoy."

CHAPTER XXI.

From the Valley of Conviction to the Devil's Auction.

1. Depression of Miss Church-Member.
2. The Merry Village.
3. The Famous Cross Roads.
4. The Devil's Auction.

AS Mr. World and Miss Church-Member proceeded on their journey they were frightened by a man who, with his hands uplifted and agony pictured on his face, came running toward them, shouting: "Let good sense control you and go no farther! Enchantment, spirits, witches, and unnamed hobgoblins dwell in every part of this hideous valley!"

"Oh, terror! What can this mean?" nervously asked Mr. World, as the stranger stood panting for breath.

"All a mystery! Even the air is filled with poison and weird music. I am thankful that I have escaped with my life."

"Come, come, Mr. Sin-Sick, tell us more about it. We may thereby profit greatly," said Mr. World with more composure.

"I had just been traveling farther down the valley of Thoughtfulness and Conviction

As Mr. World and his companion were entering the Valley of Conviction a terrified man came running toward them. He ran away from the preaching of the gospel.

when I heard multitudes shouting praises to One whom they called their Redeemer, each waving aloft a banner bearing the imprint of a cross. On the cross I saw these words: 'For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' When I came nearer to the confusion I was suddenly seized with a peculiar conviction which brought grief to my soul; and, had I not made this timely retreat, I might have been brought under the power of those strange creatures. Oh, take heed and go with me some other way."

Mr. World readily consented, but Miss Church-Member was inclined to continue, confessing that she had once been a singer in such a valley, and surely no harm could befall them there. Mr. World thought it was the part of wisdom not to oppose her at this time, although he feared that she might be induced to leave him. He consented to go, pretending that it made no difference to him which way he traveled; but, as they walked on, the wary fellow was very careful not to step from the Broad Path.

When they came in sight of the valley Miss Church-Member lifted her glasses to test the strength of her eyes. Memory brought sting-

ing grief to her heart. She commenced sighing for the old paths and also wept that she had for so long a time abetted her former enemies.

Her companion became alarmed at the new turn. "Be not so fool-hardy," he warned. Your eyes are being needlessly ruined. Quickly replace those glasses lest you become totally blind."

She obeyed promptly and thus the intensity of conviction passed. Had her spiritual ears been open, she might have heard an angel sadly singing:

"Oh, hear the song of love that fills the air!
Oh, heed the voice that pleads in touching prayer!
Both fall upon your conscience now in vain,
Through vile deceit your nobler self is slain."

In this vale she heard the word of God preached powerfully, and the calling of the Holy Spirit in unmistakable sweetness, but how could it affect one who wore such treacherous glasses and who considered her condition so favorable?

She passed through the valley with her faithful friend without being lured from the Broad Highway.

On the verge of the valley I saw a curiously shaped building and read these words over it:

TONS OF LAUGHTER: CHEAP ADMISSION.

A man with a strong voice stood along the path and cried out: "Whoa! Whoa! Ye travelers of this way! Come hither and drive away your cruel cares. Here is the greatest exhibition in the world. Smile and walk lightly, laugh and grow fat!"

Mr. World and his associate, however, did not enter this place, but passed on through the entire Merry Village. On each side of the way they saw an endless variety of gaudy advertisements, each one setting forth some leading feature of some frivolous, indecent, or gay performance.

Miss Church-Member was not tempted as was her companion to spend time at such places. So he, in order to hold her company, sacrificed his desires and passed on without complaint.

I now turned and spoke to Blackana who still mutely sat at his appointed post. "Tell me the meaning of the Merry Village being located so near the Valley of Conviction."

Without the faintest murmur he replied: "Many of the millions who pass through the valley are strangely affected with a sad countenance and a heavy heart, which indeed drive them into a frenzy so that they go toward the King's Highway. Satan intends by the attrac-

tions of the Merry Village to divert the thought of all such travelers and hold them in the bounds of the Broad Highway. You will soon come to the path on which more people go to the narrow, rugged way than on all other paths combined. Were it not for this happy village, and the places beyond, many more would drop out of our ranks."

I doubted not the words of Blackana, and as I looked out again upon the Broad Highway, I saw that the two companions had just left the Merry Village and had come to the well-beaten road leading to the right.

Here stood a preacher who, in tearful earnestness, urged all travelers to go the right way. I saw many heeding his words and go running on the new way after throwing away many cumbrous things.

At this place I saw some parting with their friends. One, in particular, I noticed who was pleading with another not to go, and ever clinging to him in bodily strength. Many who desired to leave the Broad Highway were similarly prevented.

In the fork of the road stood a number of large churches in each of which services were held every hour of the day. These were the Devil's churches, and were supplied by a courteous and shrewd class of ministers.

On the left side of the way was a large garden and a series of groves, each filled with a merry throng of pleasure-seekers. Bands of music made the air resonant, and every device known to the world of sport could be found in full fling in these varied resorts where intoxicating drink was the main beverage, and dancing and gambling were the chief delights.

The Broad Highway was especially wide at this junction. It led onward between the Devil's churches and the pleasure grounds.

The greatest confusion prevailed on this wide area. Many missionaries from the King's Highway were busily engaged in speaking to the throngs that had come through the Valley of Conviction.

There were also many friends of the Devil, in vulgar attire, persuading the multitudes to rest in the joyful grove, while other agents of Satan, in more saintly manner, urged attendance upon the church services.

Thus I observed the heedless throng from the Valley of Conviction being attracted by the music and passing through the pleasure grounds, while an alarmingly large number attended the churches in the fork of the roads. A few stoics, without pausing, passed on along the Broad Highway.

Only a few, comparatively, could be per-

suaded to turn their steps toward the King's Highway.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member stood for a long time watching the ever-changing panorama of the surging crowds. He was desirous of visiting the groves, but Miss Church-Member was too piously inclined. So they were halting between these two desires when a saintly looking person approached them.

"To what place are you journeying?" the beautiful stranger asked.

"We are journeying to a place called Heaven," promptly answered Miss Church-Member.

"Congratulations, indeed," spoke the stranger as he smiled. "You belong to the better class of travelers. Some, I fear, who go this way will miss Heaven. They are too much attracted by the frivolities of life and never have a desire to go to church."

"But we love the church," spoke up Mr. World. "However we have had little time and no opportunity to enter one for some time."

"You are welcome to the services in one of yonder buildings," said the stranger as he pointed toward the group of the Devil's churches. "There you can listen with pleasure and profit to the latest style of preaching,

and the special music will prove entertaining. You should, without fail, attend church, or you will never increase in spiritual knowledge."

Without further hesitation the two pushed their way through the crowd and entered one of the churches where they were greeted warmly and ushered to a prominent seat.

The minister had already begun to speak and was growing eloquent as he warmed to his theme. They listened with absorbing interest to every word that fell from his lips.

"Into this church," the minister said, "come the wearied of heart, troubled perchance with inward fears resulting from the weird occurrences along the pathway through the Valley of Conviction. We bid you cast aside your thoughts of trouble and be at peace. There is a calmness you should covet untouched by such conviction.

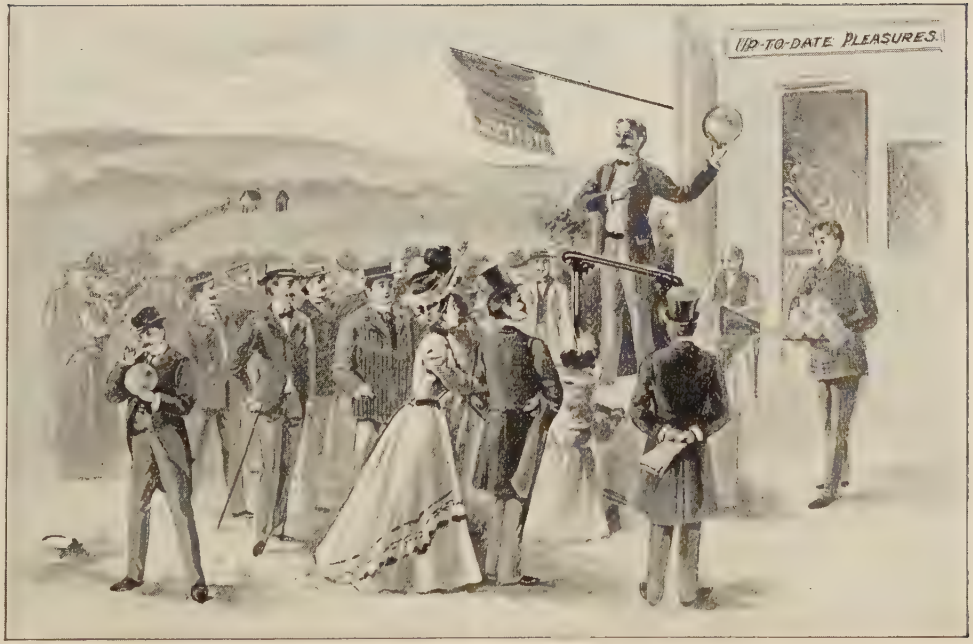
"They who sing and preach in that valley are low subjects of ignorance and folly, and happy for you if you succeed in totally forgetting all you saw or heard while passing through. Why should you worry about your condition? Are you not good enough? You have come hither from respectable parents, perhaps received Christian baptism, and can easily distinguish between right and wrong. Why should cruel daggers now pierce your

heart? What you have done or expect to do is surely pleasing to your God. If you belong to the church, you are doubly safe. Let time change, or worlds fall, the church will stand forever. If you continue faithful here, you will have a glorious end; only be not influenced by the contemptible advocates of the Narrow Way, who show their vanity by their professions of superior sanctity. Be satisfied with the good, old, staid principles of this church, and be not swept away by every wind of doctrine that is blasting the earth with its sulphurous breath. Rejoice in your pilgrimage and let conviction no longer sadden your life."

After continuing at some length in this strain, the minister announced that a quartette would render an appropriate selection just received from the mountain-tops of Apathy.

The congregation seemed to be greatly pleased as these words were sung with a show of sentiment:

"Come, ye that struggle
With thoughts of conviction;
Continue no longer
Such burdens to bear.
Throw off forever
This needless affliction;
And taste of the pleasures
That wisdom would share.



The Devil's Auction.

Here many church-members, and others, pay their all for a few baubles of worldly pleasure.

"There's rest for the soul
In blissful forgetting;
'Tis bought by the prudent
At moderate cost.
Then cast to the winds
Thy worry and fretting,
And live in the sunshine
Where shadows are lost."

At the conclusion of the services Mr. World conducted his friend from the church, and as they were moving again toward the surging crowds they heard the voice of an auctioneer.

"Let us tarry a moment," he urged as he turned his footsteps to that part of the Broad Highway known as the Devil's Auction.

A large company of men, women, and children were giving earnest heed to the auction which had been in progress all day.

The auctioneer held in his hand a gaudy bauble of worldly pleasure. He cried in the full strength of his voice that such beautiful specimens of pleasure were very rare. At once the bidding for it grew lively. It was soon thrown out to a reckless mortal who seized it with unusual avidity.

Then a door was opened in the rear, and lo, I beheld a series of rooms filled with baubles of every conceivable kind, enough to satisfy all who came for such lightsome things.

One of extraordinary beauty was next offered. "What do I hear for it?" lustily shouted the auctioneer.

The whole host bent forward eagerly to get a nearer view of the new attraction.

"I'll give one hour of time!" said an aged man.

"An hour of time is bid, an hour of time! Who'll give more?"

"I'll give one day!" joyously bid a thoughtless youth. He received it, and walked off in high glee.

"Here is another! A novelty just out!" boldly cried the auctioneer.

How anxiously all stepped forward, each one wishing to scrutinize the latest kind of pleasure offered.

The highest bidder was a restless youth who offered his all for the coveted prize.

Miss Church-Member was but little interested in these proceedings and urged her companion to the next auction-stand where certain rights and privileges were sold.

On the stand stood a glib-tongued fellow who announced that he would first offer for sale the *Right to Sell Intoxicating Drink.* "How much do I hear?" shouted the auctioneer as the cosmopolitan crowd looked on.

"One hundred dollars per annum!" cried the people of one state.

"One hundred, one hundred, going at one hundred!"

"Two hundred dollars!" bid the representatives of another state.

"Three hundred dollars!" was another offer that immediately came in.

"That is far below the value!" shouted the auctioneer. "Remember, all this money we get for licensing the saloon will go for charity or to help educate and civilize the people!"

Thousands upon thousands cheered to the echo, while the wicked auctioneer and his allies were highly pleased at the spectacle.

"Three hundred, three hundred! Altogether too low a sum for so great a privilege!"

"Five hundred dollars!" cried the authorities of another state.

"Going at five hundred, five hundred, five hundred!" rapidly and hilariously yelled the auctioneer, and the crowd cheered lustily.

"Still going at five hundred, five hundred! Who'll give six hundred? First, second, and last warning, and sold at five hundred dollars to the state represented by yonder group of delegates!"

Thus the program continued, and the right to sell liquor under respectability was sold at varying prices. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member left long before the auction was ended. They paused not at the other centers where Satan's agents were selling their worthless and death-dealing merchandize to the children of men.

CHAPTER XXII.

The Devil's Hospital.

1. Miss Church-Member, suddenly attacked with heart trouble, is hurried away to the Hospital.

2. She receives the attention of Satan's fiendish surgical operators.

3. A visit through the various wings of the Hospital and sub-offices. The horrifying work described.

THE travelers of the Broad Highway pushed onward by millions, seemingly unconscious of their end. Miss Church-Member had become so well accustomed to the ways of the world that she could now adapt herself with more ease to all the exigencies of the journey.

In the midst of her favorable circumstances she was nursing the germs of an insidious disease which rendered her heart weaker and weaker. At times short, but sharp pains were felt; and more than once her hand flew to her breast in evidence of the inward struggle.

Her disease reached a climax after she had gone not far beyond the Valley of Conviction. She was walking along in a happy mood, when she suddenly felt a pang in her heart and mentioned the circumstance to Mr. World who was still her faithful companion.

"What can it be that has been giving you this trouble for so long a time?" he asked.

"I know not," she faintly replied as she stood still and pressed both hands to her heart.

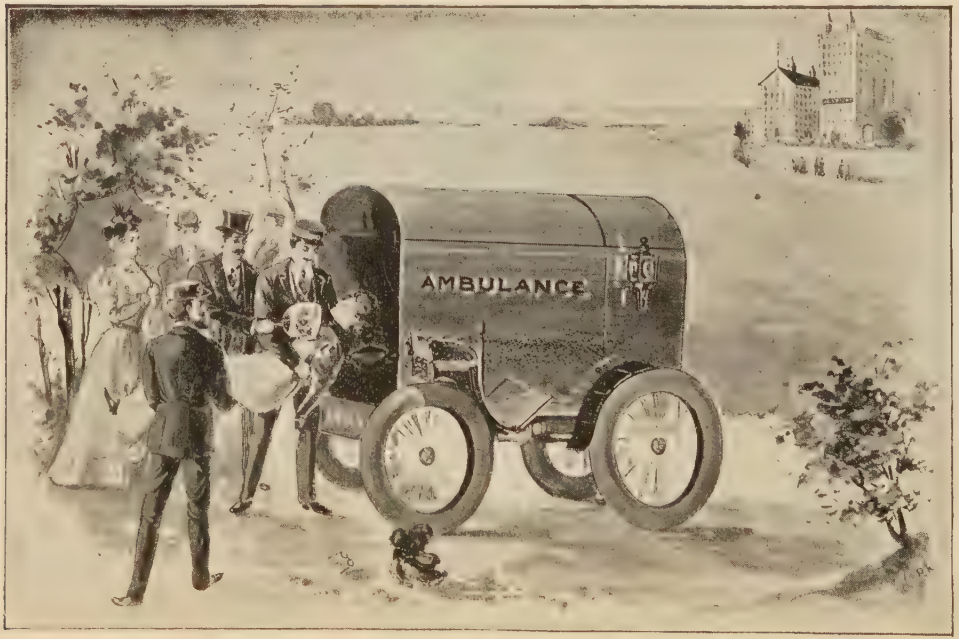
Thoroughly alarmed, Mr. World called for help while he supported her with his arm.

"It seems strange," gasped Miss Church-Member in a brief interval of relief, "that, with all the pure air along this way and the variety of things to engage my attention, I should be seized, at shortening intervals, with these cruel and unbearable heart-pangs. Oh, that I might be free from this intruder's grasp! What shall I do? Where shall I go? I feel again the edge of the invisible blade!"

At this she threw her arms upward and, shrieking in agony, was about to fall as she was caught by Mr. World.

"Let us hurry her off to the nearest hospital," promptly suggested one of the by-standers who had responded to the call for help. An ambulance carried the fainting Miss Church-Member to one of Satan's hospitals near by.

The chief physician ordered the apparently lifeless form to be taken at once to an examination room, granting Mr. World the privilege of remaining by the side of his suffering friend.



An ambulance carried the fainting Miss Church-Member to one of Satan's hospitals near by.

A quick investigation disclosed the fact that Miss Church-Member had been overcome by a partial paralysis of the heart, induced by intense mental anxiety dating from the time when she had passed through the Valley of Conviction.

"Not a serious case," said the suave doctor in reply to a question from the anxious Mr. World. "An operation will take away, almost entirely, the cause of this trouble."

"Will you not explain to me the trouble, and the nature of the operation?" nervously asked Mr. World.

"Certain nerves which ramify through the human heart have been affected emotionally by the nonsensical teachings of the King's Highway. These teachings are commonly known as 'Narrow-Guage Ideas.' If these nerves are rendered insensible, there is scarcely any trouble of that kind again. We can, by an intricate operation, paralyze the mother-nerve leading to the heart, and thereafter you may expect to find the heart of this woman almost dead to the foolish influences that needlessly send conviction and remorse into so many lives."

While the physician was rapidly speaking these words, the surgeon had arrived, and they forthwith proceeded to the operating room.

Mr. World watched the attendants as they

carried Miss Church-Member away. He saw her no more that day, but heard that the operation was successful, and that the patient was resting quietly.

One of the managers of the institution, knowing that Mr. World was companionless, offered to escort him through the various departments of the Hospital. To this he gave his hearty consent.

They first went to the tower which proved to be a magnificent point of view. Here he could see far and wide, for the building itself was situated on elevated ground, and the tower rose far into the air.

On one side of the Hospital stretched away the Broad Highway more pleasing at this point of the route than at many others, and far away it seemed to lead into pleasant woodland realms.

On the other side of the building passed the King's Highway, which, at this point, was exceedingly rough and uninviting to the view.

Thus I saw how the shrewdness of Hell was exercised in locating hospitals at such places.

"Ignorance is the mother of all that folly," said Mr. World with a feeling of self-satisfaction. "I see a long line of separate buildings

just below us—there along the King's Highway. What purpose do they serve?"

"Those are medical offices under the supervision of this hospital-staff. Any one traveling on the Narrow Path, and falling sick there, may enter for help and restoration. If the case be difficult, or requiring an operation, or even special nursing, the patient is brought to the hospital."

"Are you successful in most of your operations, especially with those patients who come from such a rugged path?"

"Fortunately we succeed in effecting a cure in almost every case. We can only deal with those who voluntarily come to our medical staff. Many, in sad need of our help, pass by all our special offices without ever seeking advice."

"Are your patients foolish enough, after having been treated, to go back to that jolting road, and thus again invite their ills?"

"Most of our patients go hence on the more delightful way which you see, and on which you have come hither."

"What diseases most commonly affect those who come to your physicians and hospitals for help?"

"Let me answer your question by taking

you down to those offices. You may there observe for yourself."

I saw Mr. World and his escort enter a physician's office which stood as near the King's Highway as Satan could build it.

The doctor was examining a church deacon who, by reason of his disease, found it hard to travel on a way so narrow and rugged. He was given a vial of medicine with specific directions.

After the patient had left, the doctor smiled derisively and pocketed his fee with ghoulish delight.

"What ailed that man asked?" Mr. World. "Can you tell me the cause of his malady?"

"He has been eating and eating sermons, exhortations, and pious literature, and has done scarcely any work for his so-called Master. Eating much and working little generally results in gout or rheumatic diseases. There are large numbers in the church coming here for treatment who are similarly affected. I suppose such Christians enjoy eating better than they enjoy working."

"Do you prepare them for better service on the King's Highway?"

"Never! My business is to give them such medicine as will make all kinds of spiritual food repulsive to them. Then, rather than

starve, they go to the fat lands on the Broad Highway for which my medicine prepares them. There they eat of the fruit forbidden by their former Master, for it is sweet-tasting withal. Some go on in the forbidden kingdoms until death, and hold an honorable place in their first church. Others are dealt with more summarily on account of the radical views entertained by certain bigots who wage warfare against a man who finds delight in gardens other than his own."

The electric bell summoned the doctor to the door. He opened it, and there stood a pilgrim from the King's Highway.

She entered and, fully exhausted, sank into a chair.

"What is the difficulty?" asked the physician in a cool manner.

"Something terrible indeed, or else my comrades accuse me unjustly."

"With what do they charge you, Miss Goodly-Minded?" he questioned, as he felt her pulse.

"I am accused of being out of order just because I do not run all the time to prayer-meeting and to other services of the church. They say I am not fit to travel this way, and therefore I have found it very difficult to get over some of the obstacles. Weariness and

fatigue have almost dragged me to the earth. My persecution will prove to be my death unless you can give me some medicine to relieve me."

"Let me see your tongue," the physician requested. This done, he continued: "Ah! I can easily see, by your coated tongue, that you have already eaten more good things than you could digest. If there is any error, it is because you have already gone to church too much. I have medicine to cure you."

At that he walked into another room and opened a secret door. I saw him pour a liquid from a large bottle labeled, "Satan's Malaria Cure." It contained a mixture of unbelief, ridicule, and self-righteousness. He filled a small vial with sugar pellets and saturated them with the mixture from the large bottle.

"Take four globules every hour," he directed, as he gave her the medicine, "and I would further advise that you travel for your health."

"What climate would be most helpful to me?" she asked, for she was a lady of considerable means and could go where she wished.

"A colder climate where you will be free from the noonday sun, and breathe in a new atmosphere. This medicine will do the rest."

She passed out of the door just as a feeble man was entering. He was an old pilgrim and evidently suffering much.

The doctor seized him by the hand with a strange vigor not even understood by Mr. World.

"So you are under the power of 'La Grippe,'" saluted the doctor.

"Under the power of something, I am sure, for everything is wrong with me, and everything seems wrong to me," was the slow answer.

The doctor soon diagnosed his case, and gave him powders with directions.

"It did not take you very long to attend to him," said Mr. World, after the aged man left the office.

"I deal with so many of that class that I keep the medicine ready. La Grippe is a splendid thing for my trade. It is affecting more pilgrims just now than any other disease. Some churches are more than decimated by the ravages of this plague.

The manager then conducted Mr. World into another office where the doctor was just giving medical attention to a young lady who was suffering with spiritual quinsy. It was so severe that she could not testify for Christ, and she wilfully passed by the "Great Physi-

cian" who could have healed her blessedly. She also passed by all the angels of mercy who throng the King's Highway. She turned a deaf ear to all the singers who sang, "Then why will ye die?" Finally she was heavily pressed by her disease and, seeing a physician's office which she could enter without climbing a step, she went in and chose rather to be treated by a doctor of the Devil, as if dead to all the offers of mercy which she had rejected.

She accepted his treatment without question, and even felt at ease in conscience, thinking that the easy, bland method of this physician was in every way preferable to the searching methods adopted by the Healer Divine.

She regained her voice, but it lost that sweet accent of heaven which once had characterized it. It was now difficult and embarrassing for her to pronounce the name of Jesus.

All this proved painful and intolerable, so she took a by-path to the left called "Unchastity" where she found a whole vocabulary of speech more suited to her utterance.

She spent the rest of her days in the habitations of immorality along the Broad Highway, unmindful of the tears and kindly solicitude of her entreating friends.

Into the third medical wing the two

went only to see the fiendish program carried on there as in the other offices. The first patient they saw was a young man who, through the misguidance of a weakling, was persuaded to enter the office.

This physician, with a smile on his face, but vile purpose in his heart, administered wilfully the very medicine that gave a transient gratification to the patient's craving for narcotics, and which would finally cause the appetite to break out anew into an inward burning and gnawing, swinging a master's lash over him.

The physician told him that his taste was inherited, and it would consequently require much patience ere he could be cured. He gave him the devilish medicine, and urged him to continue using it until the bottle was drained to its dregs.

At first it gave the promised relief, but the young man, now more deeply contaminated by this concoction of Hell, raged in wilder passion than ever, and verily ran to his utmost on the By-Path of intemperance until the flower of his youth and manhood was blasted to the blackest, and his sense of honor lost in the hovels of vice and corruption which, in great variety, stood along the Broad Highway.

The book-keepers of Hell placed an addi-

tional mark to the credit of this doctor, while the church looked on the young man's fall somewhat indifferently, having been hardened by the frequency of similar occurrences.

At the request of Mr. World the manager conducted him back to the hospital building and proceeded to show the various departments to him.

There was some commotion in one of the operating rooms just as Mr. World entered. It proved to be the preliminary work necessary for dressing a severe scalp wound.

It happened that a certain woman, named Mrs. Criticiser, who belonged to an active church, attempted to injure a good and holy man by hurling stones at him.

She noticed that the little stones did him no harm, so she seized one of larger size and hurled it at him with great force. He, being a pure man, and standing on a rock, was not even touched by the missile. But it struck the great rock on which he was standing, rebounded with unexpected force, and struck the head of Mrs. Criticiser with stunning effect.

It was seen that the stone had made an ugly gash on her head, more severe and painful than she intended to inflict on the good Mr. Class-Leader.

Her friends, being acquainted with the Devil's Hospital, naturally carried her there for necessary attention.

Mr. World saw Mrs. Criticiser brought into the room in a semi-conscious condition and watched the whole operation.

The surgeon declared that a scar would be carried on her head all through life. Indeed there is no balm in Hell to cure the wounded head or heart so as not to leave a scar. Had she gone to the "Great Physician," and asked Him aright to apply the "Balm of Gilead," her head would have been healed aright.

The manager then escorted Mr. World into one of the wards which was crowded to overflowing.

They tarried at the bedside of a man whose left arm and right leg were bandaged. There lay the poor fellow awaiting the slow processes of healing for his fractured bones.

It was on this wise that this man, a certain Mr. Treacherous, came to this sorry plight.

He was an ambitious member of the church, and aimed to be elected to an office therein. His admirers were too few, so the majority vote was given for another, named Mr. Wisdom.

This so aroused the jealousy of Mr. Treacherous that he was moved to seek amends for

what he considered a stinging and crushing defeat.

"This will I do," said he, "I will dig a deep ditch across Mr. Wisdom's path of success, and will shrewdly cover it from view, and as he chances along that way, in the course of his service, he will surely fall into this ditch to his hurt. Then will I glory in his downfall, so that the stings of this, my defeat, will not prick me so sharply."

So Mr. Treacherous, in the blackness of the night, digged the ditch and covered it ingeniously. Then he waited day after day to hear of Mr. Wisdom's injury or death, that he might have cause for rejoicing.

Now Mr. Treacherous, since his defeat, was so heavily weighed down with envy and a desire for revenge that he could not sleep soundly, and was wont to walk about the house in a somnambulistic manner.

One night, under the influence of one of these strange spells, he went from the house and walked over the path that led to the ditch.

To his great dismay and double disgrace he waked not until his body struck the bottom of the ditch. He was bruised and some of his bones were broken. Thus he lay there in agony and cried all night long for help.

Ere the morning broke he wished a thou-

sand times that he had not dug the ditch so deep, or rather, had not dug it at all.

A band of searchers found him and, lifting him from his disgrace, they hurried him to this hospital, for he was not minded to humble himself still more by going to another place where Mr. Wisdom and his kind found relief in time of trouble.

It is likely that Mr. Treacherous will never be able to walk again as perfectly as he did before, for it is the reputation of surgeons and physicians of this hospital, in dealing with cases of such extreme folly, that they so manipulate an operation as to render the patient incapable of complete recovery.

Mr. World and his congenial escort moved on from patient to patient, passing many hundreds who had met with accidents on the Broad Highway.

Many had been wounded by the "sword of the Spirit" and were now hoping to be cured by the processes here in vogue.

In passing on through another ward their attention was called to a woman who lay on a couch and seemed to be suffering more than she was able to bear.

Mr. World inquired concerning her, and was told that she was one Miss Busy-Body, a member in good standing of a radical church.

She came to her grief in this strange manner: she had a special aptitude for sweeping before other people's doors, and could always find dirt, even if she could not find anything better.

She had been told repeatedly to sweep before her own door, but she did not heed this wise counsel, for she often said that there was no dirt visible about her own home.

One day she went forth as usually, broom in hand, and swept the dirt from other doors than her own, much to the annoyance and provocation of her neighbors, for she always raised the dust incontinently.

Now by her continual neglect at home the filth had accumulated to such an extent that when she returned home and attempted to enter the door, her foot slipped on the greasy step, and she fell, breaking her collar bone, two of her ribs, and otherwise injuring herself.

The manager told Mr. World that many such cases came to them for help every day—some from the King's Highway and still more from the Broad Highway.

They soon came to the bedside of one named Mr. Jealousy who occupied a private room. He was somewhat convalescent when Mr. World saw him.

Mr. Jealousy at one time was an active

member of the church, but he undertook to stab Mr. Stability in the back. But Mr. Stability had a good back-bone so strong that no knife that Mr. Jealousy could handle was able to penetrate it.

One time in desperation Mr. Jealousy flung himself violently upon his imaginary foe. But his blade broke, and he himself fell upon it, cutting a terrible gash in his side. He was taken to this hospital for help.

Thus did Mr. Jealousy bring upon himself the disfavor of his church and he was forthwith expelled, for he refused to give the required promise of reformation.

Mr. World and the manager now came to a large door.

"In this room," said the manager, "we keep all our cancer patients. We have a large number of them and, since they require special treatment, we keep them separate to facilitate the work of the physicians and nurses.

I saw them enter the room, and heard the words of surprise that fell from the lips of Mr. World as he saw the magnitude of this department.

"These are they," explained the chief of the division, "who came here through 'profane and vain babblings.'"

Mr. World then passed through the lep-

rosy ward where he saw quite a few who were once cleansed by the Divine Healer, but who, failing to give thanks for their recovery, suffered fatal relapse and were now in the last stages of this dread disease.

This place was so loathsome to him that he was hastened into the General Department where he saw all manner of patients, each in his particular dilemma.

A great number of this section were suffering from disordered livers, and of these not a few came from the church.

One such, who was a wealthy man, had so far protruded his disagreeableness upon the community that the church officials voluntarily gave him medicine for his liver. This was of no avail. He still grew more irritable and complained about the preacher, the sexton, the choir, and even his own wife. The weather never suited him, and when he gave any testimony about religion it was always a partial outline of the supposed or real sorrows and troubles of the Christian pilgrimage.

While suffering from one of his morbid spells, he listened to the voice of the tempter who persuaded him to seek help at the hands of the physicians under the control of this Hospital.

These doctors dosed him until they persuaded him to submit to an operation, and the wicked surgeon knew how to render him still more liable to trouble after his imaginary restoration toward which he was looking when Mr. World saw him.

When he leaves this Hospital he can never be cured from the fiercer subsequent attacks unless he be born again, and such an event Satan knows is very unlikely to occur.

Mr. World, in passing, spoke to quite a few who were suffering from spiritual dyspepsia, consumption, and a great number of other ailments which had developed into chronic form, or had made necessary the surgeon's cruel knife, and then, turning to his obliging friend, asked if he could not now see Miss Church-Member.

He was taken into a special department arranged for those who were convalescent.

When she saw her faithful and loving friend, Miss Church-Member smiled for the first time since the operation.

The pleasant interview soon ended at the behest of the nurse, and Mr. World was asked if he wished to enter the secret departments underground.

This question aroused his curiosity and led to a lengthy conversation after which he expressed a desire to visit the secret chambers.

He was conducted into a dark office and asked to sign a pledge that lay on a desk.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Satan's Secret Service.

1. While Miss Church-Member is convalescent, Mr. World alone visits the underground apartments where secret sins are taught.

2. The last horrible stages of vice represented.

I SAW Mr. World standing in a shadowy room and reading the conditions of entering "Satan's Secret Service." He was soon surprised by hearing a voice from a gloomy corner: "You cannot gain entrance to these secret abodes unless you sign that pledge."

"The meaning of the pledge is not clear to me. Who will explain it?" asked Mr. World somewhat tremulously.

"You can read between those lines all you wish. Those sentences must be their own interpreters, and you must choose to sign or withdraw from this room, just as you prefer," came the firm answer from the dark corner.

Before Mr. World could decide what particular course to take, a hand gently touched his shoulder. He turned to see who stood in the rear.

"O, Mr. World, thou needst not fear to sign the pledge and enter the secret service of

our great and glorious master," were the words that greeted him in a friendly tone.

"Who art thou, and how camest thou here?" asked Mr. World in suspense.

"I came here from 'going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.'" Then, without uttering another word, the strange visitor lifted the pledge from the desk and read it audibly:

> "Into these darker chambers let me go,
> I promise to conceal its scenes of woe,
> And solemnly declare, as here I stand,
> That I will aid this secret working band."

"What can there be about that pledge not suited to your wish? It means that you are to have your eyes opened to behold new things, and also to learn the secret laws of life, healthful to your marrow and your bones."

Mr. World hesitated no longer. He signed the document forthwith, and a pass-word was whispered into his ear.

Suddenly a door opened at one end of the room, through which Mr. World walked into a large cavern which was illuminated only by faint glimmerings of light.

He could discern faintly that many creatures were there whose uncanny noises, freighted with oaths and blasphemies, sent their sulphur-

ous fumes around. Although Mr. World was accustomed to foul scenes and profanity, yet he was sickened at this deeper touch of Hell.

"Where am I and how came I here?" he cried out excitedly. A woman came quickly in response to his outcry.

"You are in a place of liberty and personal license," she answered. "Here you are free from the annoyances of narrow-minded pilgrims from the King's Highway, and you may spend a season in pure delight in these secret abodes which you will find more and more suited to the cravings of your natural heart and mind."

Now Mr. World was a somewhat judicious man, and although he would not sanction what he called church fanaticism, yet he had some self-respect, and had never allowed himself to reach the slum-level of society.

"Here I cannot and will not stay. Are there no other apartments to which I can go?" he asked, as the woman offered him a glass of wine, and in a sensual way entreated him to remain.

Mr. World was a lover of wine, but was suspicious of the place, and so he moved to go and found great difficulty in getting to another door, which, at last, he reached only by determination, and, giving a pass-word, he

went into the first regular department of Satan's Secret Service.

This place, which was secretly connected with the Wizard City, was one of Satan's centers from which originated schemes and devices to commit and practice embryonic murder.

I saw in this dark cavern the sons and daughters of earth, high and low, noble and ignoble, and my heart bled within at what I further witnessed.

Mr. World passed through from one section to another, studying carefully the secret processes in vogue, while illustrations, drawn by the artists of the Devil, instead of sending the blush of shame to his cheek, only fed his inner curiosity and verily aroused his baser passions.

Having finished, he gave the pass-word and was admitted to a sub-department called Foeticide.

This section, and the one he had just left, were located directly under the physicians' offices along the King's Highway. It could be seen that there was direct connection between these offices and the horrible subterraneous apartments through which Mr. World was now passing.

So many unnatural and horrible things

were practiced in this sub-department that Mr. World was shocked beyond measure, for he had never dreamed of the extent of the malpractice to which his eyes here bore testimony.

All these things, while at first revolting, were only hardening his own heart to such an extent that, before he had passed through the last wing of the department, and heard the apologetic words of those who were in charge, he concluded that these agencies conduced to much good.

"Oh!" thought I, "how the light of Hell casts a strange coloring over the things of earth, thereby creating false theories of mortal life."

By means of the pass-word Mr. World was enabled to visit the next department where he witnessed sights more revolting than in any place previously entered. Here groveled the youth under the power of so-called stimulating medicaments.

Mr. World, with all his wickedness, was chilled with horror at these underground spectacles.

Noticing his evident disgust, one came to him and offered soothing explanations to which he listened very attentively.

"This is a blessed place," spoke the newcomer. "We, who are skilled in crime, give

the youthful an expert training in the ways of pollution and kindred types of immorality. It is far better to teach the young to sin aright and with least damage to themselves, than to place them under all restraint and see them fall more wretchedly than these."

With all the moral turpitude of Mr. World he was scarcely ready, at first hearing, to accept this grinding sophistry of Hell.

"Are you quite sure, my friend, doubted Mr. World, that you are speaking words of soberness to me? Do you feel proud of the results of the work here accomplished?"

"Proud indeed, for our master has given us encomiums for the splendid work accomplished. You see, Mr. World, it is a settled fact that young people will sin, notwithstanding all the influence exerted to the contrary. Such as we can persuade we take under our direction, and try, as soon as possible, to harden them in personal crime. Our physicians have special medicines to inflame their propensities, so that they may, by continual burning, consume themselves and spare the youth from otherwise being tormented day and night in these flames of passion. Are you so dull, Mr. World, that you cannot grasp such self-evident truth?"

"It seems now somewhat clearer to my

mind, but still my eyes behold such horrid scenes around me."

"I cannot question that," continued the smooth-tongued agent of darkness, "yet what you see are but the lower stages. If you could look beyond these dark corridors and see the types of womanhood which grow out of this under-soil, you would no longer breathe in doubt or look with shuddering frame on scenes around you. All good things come forth through putrefaction. Then why should you despise the putrefaction? Be content, Mr. World, and as you walk along the path of life, remember this great College underground, and recommend its salient features to the rising generation. You have signed the pledge and promised to aid this secret working band. So do it with a vim, keeping in view the blossoms and the fruit of after-growth."

Mr. World was completely won by this false and devilish reasoning, and looked on the whole program of shame quite philosophically.

He took full cognizance of the far-reaching effects of this section and, after an interview with one of the head physicians, he proceeded to visit the next section.

But what he saw there will not be told. No pen can describe and no tongue relate the loathsome filth of this last stage of immorality.

An awful stench filled the air arising from medicines of last resort and from the putrefying flesh that clothed the living skeletons.

It was by mistake that Mr. World got into this place. The door opened to admit a few "Unfortunates," as they were called by the attendants, and Mr. World, standing near by, entered without permission.

He was no sooner inside the door than he was frantically seized by a sunken-eyed creature.

"O man of health, deliver me from this inner eating and from the grave that opens to me its mouldy mouth!" was the heart-rending cry that grated on the ears of Mr. World.

Another, hearing this pleading cry, came rushing toward the same spot and sobbed piteously:

"Oh! Mr. World, have pity on me! I had help when I had means and vitality. Oh! give me some relief now."

Mr. World was so terror-stricken that he could not speak, but struggled with all his might to escape from the place.

He gained double strength, but of no use. These two men imagined that they had a claim on him by reason of his name, and therefore held on with tightening grasp.

For a moment Mr. World ceased his struggling and looked at his two pitiable beseechers.

"I can give you nothing. Why torment me thus?" he tremblingly gasped with abated breath.

"In our better days we gave all we had to the world and now we need help. Surely you can give it." They became furious and ranted the more at the thought of their past folly.

"Why come to me? Go to Mr. Flesh, or ask the Devil for help," pleaded Mr. World.

"We have served the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. All have failed us miserably. To whom else can we go but to anyone within our reach? Oh! forsake us not in this awful plight!"

Poor Mr. World, unable longer to bear the sickening and threatening attack, sank to the filth-covered floor and groaned aloud.

At once a fierce and powerful being came to the rescue and, flinging the two unfortunates aside, lifted Mr. World to his feet and looked down upon him with his awful eyes.

Mr. Intemperance lay crouching near the side of Mr. Lust, each smarting under the pain of his fall.

"How came you to this place?" sternly asked the monster.

"By walking in at the door," answered the terrified Mr. World.

"Without permission?" he further asked.

"There was no one there to ask, and I, being out sight-seeing, thought I might also enter in here."

The monster seized Mr. World by the arms and looked at him in a still more frightful manner.

"You are not yet ready to come into this region, and if you will solemnly pledge me that you will never reveal what you have seen here, I will conduct you safely to the door; if not, you must remain here without a ray of hope until death gives relief."

Mr. World humbled himself and gave double assurance of secrecy. Then the grim creature conducted him a little to one side and bade him look down into a deep and dark yawning chasm.

"Down there," commenced the Old Monster, "runs the Black River deep and wide. The stream, coming from its distant source, drains the filthy realm of human society, and not far hence it enters into the boundless ocean of eternal death. The wild sounds which you hear are the unseen dashings of its never-ceasing waves, and the moans of those who have fallen victims to its merciless currents."

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Last Warning.

1. Miss Church-Member is now induced to frequent the haunts of vice in the "Wicked Valley."

2. The blessed work of Warning as given by rescue bands from the King's Highway.

3. The heedless throngs passing by.

4. The experiences at this place of Mr. World and Miss Church-Member.

THERE was a joyful meeting in the reception room of the Hospital when Mr. World, returning from his underground experiences, met his beloved friend Miss Church-Member who had recovered sufficiently to resume the journey.

In joyful spirits they sauntered forth on the wide and pleasant path, away from the Hospital and toward their imaginary Heaven.

Miss Church-Member's face was more cheerful and her footsteps more buoyant than at any time since she left the Valley of Conviction.

Mr. World, observing her favorable condition, complimented her with these words: "Blessed be the memory of that Hospital, for I can see that your face is no more covered with the cloud of care that once robbed you of so many joys. The unkind intruder has

drifted away, and now the light radiates from your every feature. It is also plainly evident that you are no more tormented by a troubled conscience."

"I am glad that my sufferings have not been in vain," she modestly declared. "May the new light which you so readily notice in my face add to the pleasantness of our journey and the profit of our lives."

Their conversation grew more and more pleasant as they passed through a long stretch of woodland. They could see beyond them, and in the rear, the legions that were traveling the same path and in the same direction.

Emerging from the woodland they saw that their path came again in close proximity to the King's Highway.

The intervening space between the two paths, called the Wicked Valley, was all astir with every form of evil as practiced in the world of sin. In this vale nearly every traveler on the Broad Highway tarries awhile, and many are lured away from the Highway of the King here to mingle with the servants of Mammon.

Mr. World and his friend paused opposite a cluster of magnificent buildings with frontage toward the Heavenly Way. Some were used by vulgar theatricals; some devoted to

the sensual dance; some were occupied by the Devil's maid-servants in prostitution, and many others were used as haunts of intemperance and personal pollution.

All along the road to perdition at thousands of places stand such clusters of buildings, each under the command of one of Satan's most efficient leaders.

"Here," said Mr. World, "let us take a long rest. If you have your glasses properly adjusted you can see new beauty behind magnificent walls."

She looked at first doubtfully. "Ah! I never frequented such places before. I would not as much as look at them."

"I doubt not your word, Miss Church-Member, but remember you are growing older and wiser. You are no more a narrow-minded creature influenced by prejudice and sophistry."

She was now in a condition to imagine that much of her earlier instruction was erroneous. She had not forgotten the teaching of the sermon in Mr. World's church. Subsequently she reasoned that the only way to learn the taste of forbidden fruit was to eat of it.

"I will enter these buildings as a student," she soliloquized. "I will be cautious.

Surely I have sufficiently clear judgment to discern between good and evil."

The crafty Mr. World, having won her confidence, escorted her all through the Wicked Valley. By a continual palliation she yielded one point after another until her virtue was sacrificed on a cursed altar.

Satan assisted her in solving many perplexing problems when she reeled in the realm of doubt.

At the conclusion of their protracted visit I heard the wicked Mr. World say to his beloved friend: "Your eyes are completely cured. You may now with safety lay aside the glasses. I hope you will never have occasion to use them again."

Of the multitudes that tarried here from the Narrow Way very few went out at the front door. Having stultified themselves, they passed from the rooms at the rear, and thenceforth traveled on the other path more suited to their changed natures.

The two congenial companions, proceeding on their way, soon overtook a company of church-members.

In the social intercourse which ensued each one resented the criticisms of those who refused to leave the Old Path.

"Verily," said one, "I now enjoy more

liberty. I believe the road to Heaven should be as broad-gauged as possible."

"Certainly it should," said another. "Those who want to climb hills and continually suffer inconveniences may do so. As for me, I want to reach Heaven on the easiest road. I believe this course leads to Paradise just as directly as the other.'

These utterances were highly complimented by Mr. World, and he said that he was to be congratulated on meeting and associating with such congenial people. "On the way on which we are now traveling one can reach his reward as certainly and as speedily as on any other route. In addition, one can here enjoy natural and graceful pleasures which of course are not tolerated under the eyes of selfish and narrow-minded bigots."

I saw Mr. World and Miss Church-Member, now more intimate than ever, pass on alone, ever walking more hastily. Satan had told them, during their stay in the Wicked Valley, that the faster they journeyed the sooner and the more certainly would they reach their reward.

Not far from the Wicked Valley there is a section called the Place of Warning. It has been maintained for thousands of years by virtuous workers from the King's Highway.

It is the last warning-station that travelers pass before reaching the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and here with tearful earnestness do the Shining Pilgrims of the cross speak their words of last caution, sing their sweet hymns of warning, and put forth every other loving endeavor in the hope of snatching some from the thoughtless throngs that go rushing by toward the Dark Valley.

I listened and heard a voice from the Place of Warning speak to a motley crowd that were passing.

"Whither go ye, whither go ye?"

"We go to a better place called Heaven," answered one of the company.

"Then come hither and go on the Path of Life. The way on which ye are now traveling leadeth unto everlasting death."

"Aha! Aha! Aha!" cried they all. "We are well informed about the way and need no foreign voice to give direction."

Then came the solemn hymn of warning in words so tender and clear that each one could hear every sentence:

"There's a sad day coming,
A sad day coming.
There's a sad coming by and by;
When the sinner shall hear his doom:
'Depart, I know you not.'
Are you ready for that day to come?"

CHORUS :

"Are you ready ? Are you ready ?
Are you ready for the judgment day ? "

The words had not yet died on the air when a young man ran hastily from the company toward the Way of Life. His companions then gave vent to their ridicule, some even going after him and endeavoring to pull him back, but without avail.

Some sang an idle song to drown the hymn of warning that still rang in their ears. Others engaged in boisterous conversation, and still others mocked with foul profanity. They passed on, and as far as I could see them they were pushing on to the Valley of Death.

I saw another man who was heavily burdened with pieces of timber on which was written : "Faults of Church-Members. " He also came to the Place of Warning.

"Throw off the cumbersome weight you are carrying on your back, and travel on the way where your burden will be light, " came a friendly voice from the Rescue Station.

"I am not so foolish as to throw away my only hope, " he answered with unthankfulness in his tone.

" 'Your only hope,' " repeated the voice of warning, "how can you explain such foolish words ? "

"With passing ease. I will soon come to the River of Death and with these boards I can make myself a raft whereon I can pass over safely."

Then spoke the voice of warning clearer than before:

"O, foolish man! Knowest thou not that the River of Death, toward which thou art rapidly moving, cannot be crossed in a bark so frail? I have seen millions who tried in vain to ride its angry currents, but they sank beneath its dark waters. Come, O mortal man, if thou hast nothing better on which to depend, listen to the voice of wisdom and come, without delay, to the Path of Glory."

But the man passed on. I watched him till he reached the river, and saw him go from the shore in his self-constructed raft.

"I sink! I sink! Save me!" he cried in utmost agony of terror as his little raft whirled about, leaving the poor self-deceived fellow to the mercy of the waves.

I saw others as they passed the Place of Warning. Thousands and tens of thousands, some now totally deaf to every voice of warning, some with cotton-filled ears, and others with instruments of music with which they drowned the calls of warning.

Many more passed by who carried little

balloons of self-righteousness with which they expected to rise above the murky River of Death.

A young woman, who moved more cautiously, stopped at the Place of Warning and listened attentively.

Directly a voice spoke to her: "Not far hence, O mortal woman, there is a wide river. It surges on forever. No one who goes this way can escape its waters. Listen now to the voice of Wisdom. Leave this blood-marked way of misery and woe, and come to these happier dominions where 'her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.'"

"Surely I will not be lost," she replied. "I am depending on the mercy of God who is too kind to be unjust. I will come out all right in the end."

"Take heed, my friend," pleaded the warning voice. "You are hoping for mercy at the dividing line between time and eternity. Better forget not what the Scripture saith. 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still.' So thou canst not wilfully neglect so great salvation and hope that God will cover at last all thy folly. 'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.' 'To-day, if ye hear his voice, harden not your hearts.'"

"You have said nothing new to me. They are the old thread-bare passages that I have heard from my youth up, and I am minded to accept a broader view of these statements than you seem to take of them."

At this she tossed her head haughtily and continued her journey, resolving more firmly than ever that she would not spend eternity outside the Gates of Heaven.

When she came to the Dark Valley and to the angry swelling currents, her pitiful prayer broke out from the long-covered depth of her soul. "Mercy, O mercy, to a wretch like me!" But no hand came to her rescue.

I saw Mr. World and Miss Church-Member as they approached the Place of Warning. They heard the sweet music, rendered so excellently, but gave no attention to the sentiment expressed by the words. They listened only to the harmony of sounds.

"O, Miss Church-Member!" pleaded a voice, "you who were once so earnestly engaged on the King's Highway, will you not, before you reach the River of Death, forsake your perilous course and walk on the path of life eternal?"

These words, which would have once brought conviction to her heart, now only brought vanity to her head.

"'Judge not, that ye be not judged,' and go speak to the lost, not to me so well equipped to meet the direst foe. Turn your words to those on the other path, who go hobbling along in misery, not fit to live or die."

"Come, come!" put in Mr. World, "your pearls before swine are only trampled under foot. Forget not so quickly the teachings of our Lord."

As they passed on, in a self-righteous manner, she cheerily looked into his face and said: "It was kind in you to come so promptly to my rescue. I might have prattled there a whole day and yet not have shown them half their folly."

CHAPTER XXV.

The Valley of the Shadow of Death.

1. Mr. World and Miss Church-Member getting farther from the light.

2. They drift into the deepening shadows where the path could be traveled only one way.

3. The terrible experience of the two companions contending with the imps of the dark valley.

4. Their sad and tragic end as they catch a glimpse of what they might have been.

AFTER leaving the place of the Last Warning, the Broad Highway grew darker and darker as it steadily diverged from the King's Highway.

The little light that Satan's pilgrims do enjoy is borrowed from "the path of the just that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Mr. World saw the deepening shadows and endeavored to be as cheerful as usually, hoping thereby to prevent any alarm in the mind of his faithful friend.

The path, though wide, was now steeply descending, and travelers often slipped on the steeper inclines.

I saw that the two companions descended with difficulty, cautiously watching every foot-

step, lest they, like many others, should fall to their hurt. They now gave but little attention to the things along the way, and when they did pause for rest on the easier grades, they found the meadows more barren and everything more dark and dank.

Miss Church-Member had been painfully conscious of these unhappy contrasts, and asked repeatedly the meaning of all that her eyes beheld and her heart realized, but Mr. World, true to his nature, partly allayed her fears with words of hope and glowing promises.

But I heard her again ask with a quivering voice: "Where is the light that so lately lent its blessed cheer, and whither go we stumbling downward in the dark?"

"We only go in the darkest hour that comes before the dawn," he said with a firm voice but a trembling heart. "Be hopeful, my dear, I will not forsake you."

Her heart was not calmed, for she could see his distress which he had hoped to conceal, and no one could minimize the surrounding scenes which now seemed like omens of death.

They stood still, and learned, upon inquiry, that they were standing in the Shadows of Premonition.

Mr. World could no longer endure the

strain. His bold attitude gave way to his rising fears, for he saw that his wasted life was ending with no opportunity of redeeming its days. His whole body quivered as they walked still farther in a desperate effort to find relief.

Miss Church-Member was almost overcome as she continued looking upon the ominous darkness around. She soon realized that her only refuge whom she had seized by the arm proved miserably weak in this hour of great need.

"Oh! Mr. World," she cried, in utmost agony of mind, "where have you led me? Save me ere I perish!"

He spoke not, but with his aspen fingers he pointed backwark toward the sloping Highway. Then with all eagerness they endeavored to retrace their steps, but somehow they could do no more than stumble and fall, and when they were making their most desperate effort to return they heard a voice from someone invisible. This voice announced to them that here the path could be traveled only one way. The same voice urged them to push through the shadows and face their end like heroes. At this their hope died within them, and they had no more courage to struggle up the hill.

They stood again in their wretched dilemma and heard the sound of distant waters, doleful to their ears, and from this they could distinguish the bitter wails of those who also found that they could not return.

Mr. World and Miss Church-Member cast their eyes heavenward and discerned that they were standing in a very deep valley. *They saw the dim outlines of all their past evil life. Their deeds stretched away at interminable length, and in the aggregate they were piled, like ledge upon ledge, until they verily shut out the mercy of a just God.*

Here they stood in the first shadow of their self-constructed Hell.

"Oh, what a valley!" shrieked Miss Church-Member, as her consciousness now revealed to her more in one second than all the fanciful dreams of a life-time evolved.

And Mr. World was undone. He knew not which way to turn. He was speechless as he saw so clearly the worthless product of his life's work almost overarching him.

Finally Mr. World cried out excitedly: "If we cannot go back, neither will we go forward!"

Then a grim monster spoke in a slow, dead tone: "No one remaineth here; away, away from this place!"

Miss Church-Member was terrorized at the

presence of so cold a creature and frantically cried out: "I cannot and will not endure it! Can I not go back to the Voice of Warning?"

"Back? Never! No one who comes thus far ever goes back. During the earthly life of one called Jesus there was but one snatched from these lowlands, and he was the thief on the cross."

"If there was chance for a thief, there might be hope for me," she sighed as her wretched face brightened.

"Hope for you?" repeated the cold-hearted monster. "None whatever, and for none of your kind who come thus far. Pass on, make room for the thousands coming this way, the sound of whose tread you already hear."

Looking at Mr. World she pitifully sobbed: "Why do you not help me? You have brought me here; plead my cause."

"Alas, I cannot even plead my own!" He could say no more, for he took a longing glance backward, over the hills of time, where he could truly see, for the first time, the horrible depth of his folly.

Then came the monstrous creature again and sternly commanded them: "Tarry no more on this side of the river's brink."

They tasted the bitter fruits of opportunities lost, and felt the awful pangs of a soul

Struggling with the real and imaginary imps near the Black River in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

When they who journey the King's Highway reach the River of Death, they are met by a convoy of angels and borne aloft to the gates of the Celestial City.

Their heart-rending cries for mercy brought no relief. They had sinned against all light, and had even spurned the last kindly warning. The Door of Hope was shut forever.

As they were sinking to rise no more they caught another vision of the Shining Pilgrims of the King's Highway, and saw that when they reached the brink of the River of Death they were met by a convoy of angels, on whose snowy pinions they were borne aloft to the very gates of the Celestial City which apparently stood on white clouds.

THE END.

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